COLLECTIBLE GUITAR

then and now

Imagine Finding John Lennon's Long Lost Gibson J-160E

Last year, someone did ...
then realized he'd had it
for 46 years!

REVIEWS

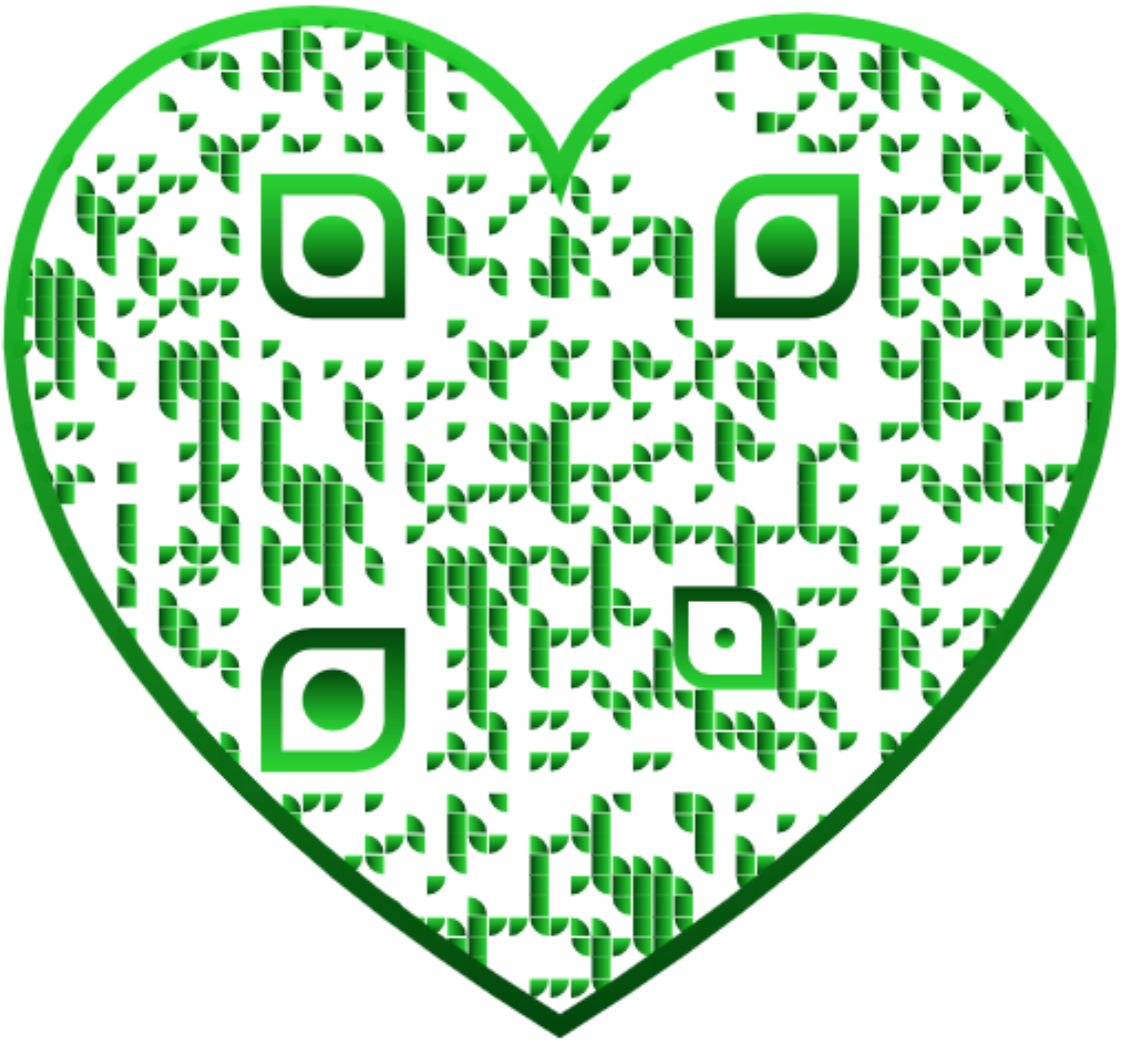
- KNAGGS SEVERN TREMBUCK – TIER 2 – ELECTRIC GUITAR
- GOLD TONE MICROBASS
- MARTIN GUITARS ED SHEERAN X SIGNATURE MODEL
- DPA MICROPHONES D:VOTE 4099G INSTRUMENT MICROPHONE

JUL/AUG 2015

8 88680 05978 1

$5.95 US $6.95 Canada

VOL 2 :: ISSUE 4



Petros Guitars
345 County Rd. CE
Kaukauna, Wisconsin 54130

www.petrosguitars.com

L Series ★★★

ON THE ROAD with The Smashing Pumpkins

Billy Corgan

Jeff Schroeder

LL16R

Catch Yamaha L-Series on the road this summer with The Smashing Pumpkins' In Plainsong - An Acoustic-Electro Evening tour!

Monuments to an Elegy

YAMAHA

Get to know L-Series here:
4wrd.it/LSeriesCG

©2015 Yamaha Corporation of America. All rights reserved.
Photos of Billy and Jeff were shot on location at Chicago's Virgin Hotel.

CS12

- The first power brick to use 1 SPOT® technology
- 12 fully isolated outputs
- 5 voltage options provide power for virtually any effect pedal
  - Variable 4–9Vdc, 12 Vdc, 18 Vdc, 9Vdc and 9Vac
- Includes brackets for mounting under Pedaltrain® pedalboards
- Cables and converter plugs included
- Switchable Worldwide Input Voltage

3x more power
...than the most common power brick

CS7

- The first power brick to use 1 SPOT® technology
- 7 fully isolated outputs
- 3 voltage options provide power for 99% of effect pedals
  - 9Vdc, 12 Vdc and 18 Vdc
- Includes brackets for mounting under Pedaltrain® pedalboards
- Cables and converter plugs included
- Worldwide Input Voltage

2x more power
...than the most common power brick

V3
Jekyll & Hyde
Overdrive
+
Distortion

TRUETONE®

{formerly Visual Sound}

TRUETONE.COM

DO YOU COLLECT AMERICAN GEAR?

DON'T FRET.

The Kyser® Quick-Change®
is 100% made in the USA.

Guaranteed for life.

www.kysermusical.com

KYSER® MUSICAL PRODUCTS

MADE IN USA

FROM ONE COLLECTOR TO ANOTHER...

Talent Booster

I had a pretty wild two-week run of guitar shows in May. The first annual Tacoma Guitar Festival in Tacoma, WA was a big hit! I was a co-producer with the City of Tacoma and we had 125 exhibitor booths sold and three times the normal attendance for a guitar show in the Great Northwest. There was a lot of sales activity, both vendor-to-public, and also vendor-to-vendor. With music by Jerry Miller (of Moby Grape fame), Ian Moore, Adrian Galysh, Jasper T., and Internet teaching sensation Griff Hamlin - it was a well-rounded day. Yes, a new guitar festival was born!

Then, two weeks later, I went to the Dallas International Guitar Festival. We had an exhibit booth there for the magazine and I took along a 1973 Fender Strat (originally white in color but that had aged to a beautiful yellow). I knew the amount in my head that I was hoping to get for it. In a strange sequence of events I traded the Strat for two guitars (a 1960 Gibson Les Paul Junior that had a few minor issues and a 60's Fender Musicmaster) plus $200 cash. Then within two hours I sold both of the traded guitars to a guitar dealer from New York for almost the total amount I was hoping for the 73' Strat... just shy by $200. But then I remembered I had the $200 in my pocket from the trade in. It was fast, it was a bit wild, I learned a lot, and I got the correct amount. Pretty cool eh?

Back at the Tacoma Guitar Festival I was walking around the exhibition hall and one of our vendors (who is also a sales rep) gave me a "Talent Booster" effects pedal made by Zombie Box Pedals. From the moment I held it (it was very light weight) I knew I had something special in my hands. The sarcasm behind the fact that you after plug into it... it does absolutely nothing when you click on the footswitch (but light up the LED)... well that struck me as pretty funny. Then you read the back of it and it says...

"Product will not affect tone at all"

"Product will not improve your playing"

"When indicator is off, no big deal"

Clever stuff.

But maybe on a more "bright side" view of this unique pedal, one could use it as a confidence builder. Go ahead and prepare in your mind that you are going to nail that guitar part, then step on it to show yourself you are ready... and then play like all heaven is listening!

Guitar people helping guitar people,

Bruce & Judy
Adolph

COLLECTIBLE GUITAR then and now

4227 S. Meridian, Suite C PMB #275, Puyallup Washington 98373
Phone: 253.445.1973 Fax: 888.391.4440
www.CollectibleGuitar.com

Published by The Adolph Agency, Inc.
©2015 The Adolph Agency Inc. All Rights Reserved. Any portion of this magazine may not be used or reproduced without the expressed consent of The Adolph Agency, Inc.

Editor & President: Bruce Adolph
bruce@collectibleguitar.com

VP/Office Manager: Judy Adolph

Street Team: Mike Adolph, Jesse Hill & Winston

Design & Layout: Matt Kees

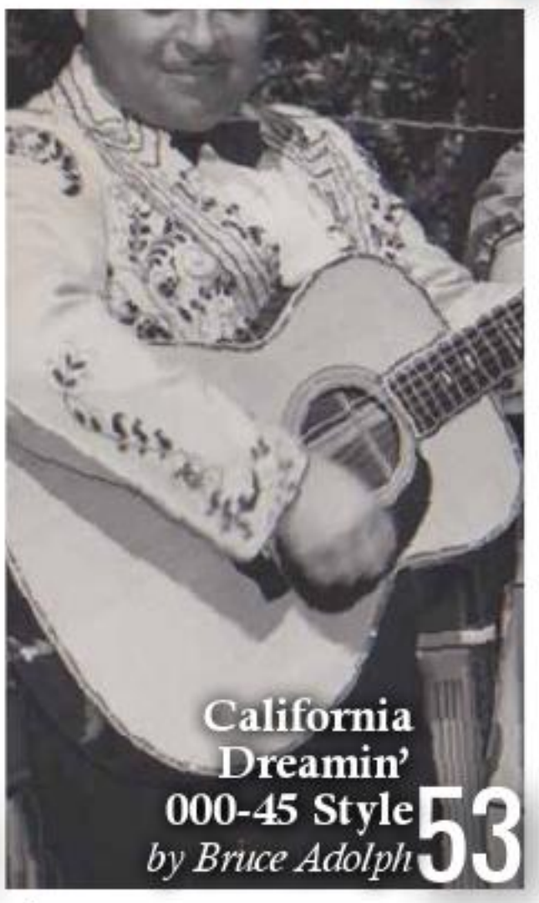
Photographer/Advisor: Joe Riggio

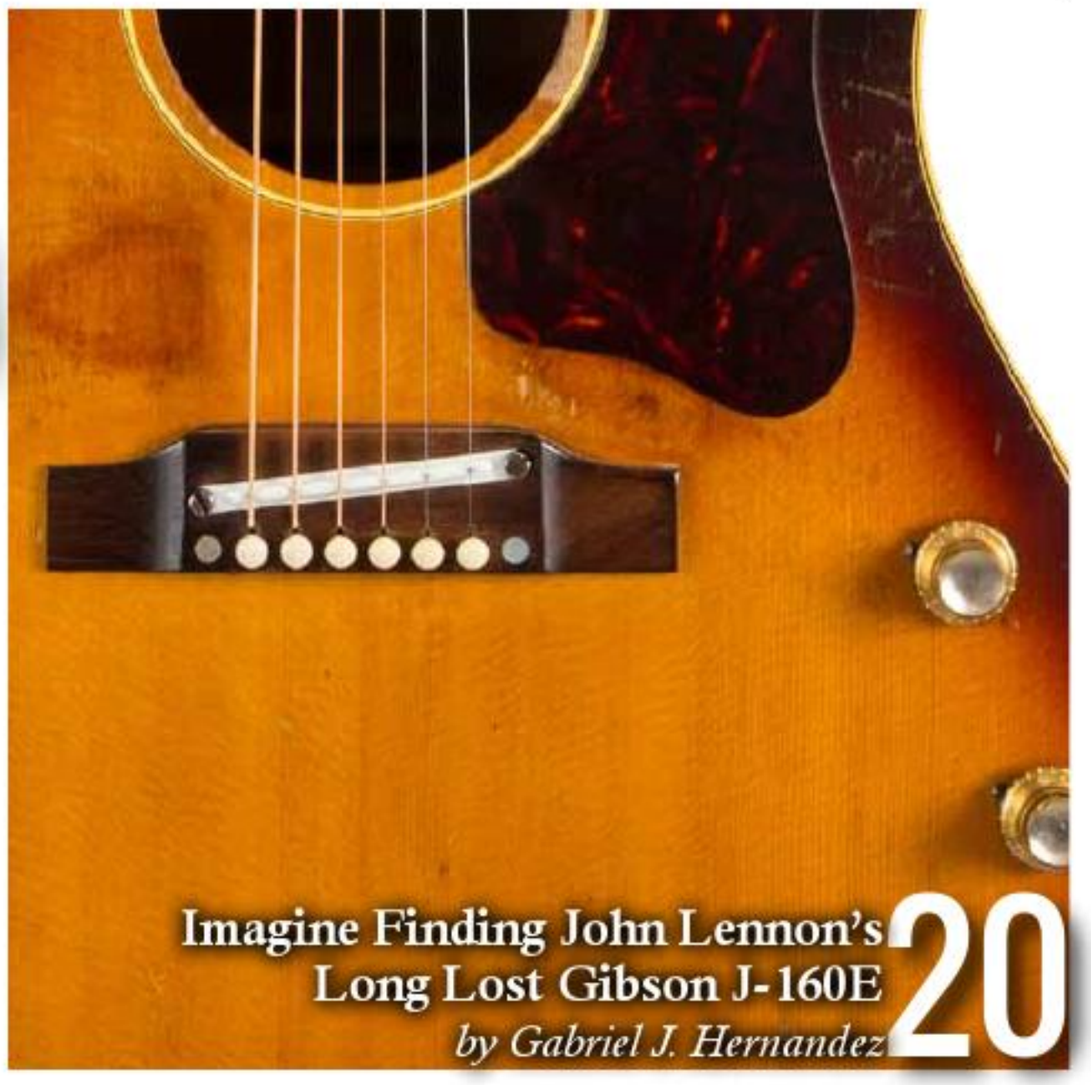
Customer Service: Brian Felix, brian@collectibleguitar.com

Director of Advertising: Steve Sattler
steve@creativesalesresource.com 626-836-3106

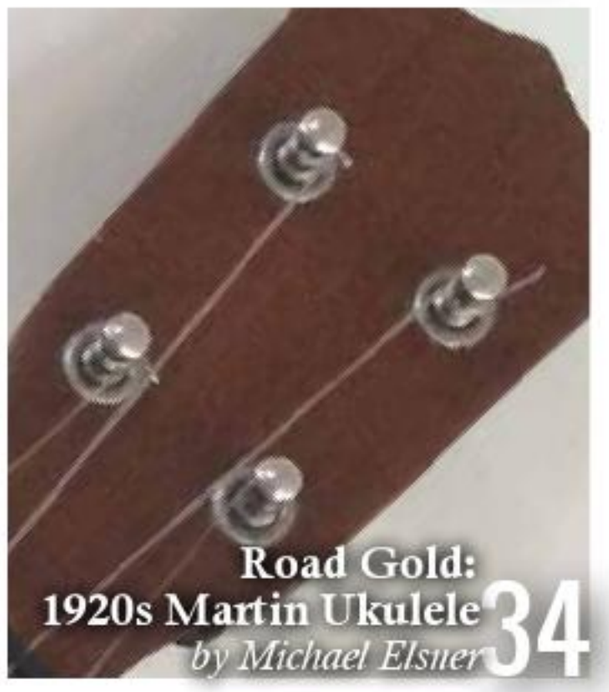
Advertising Sales: Drew Adolph, drew@collectibleguitar.com

FEATURES





cover photo by Tony Batakis



COLUMNS & STORIES

10 **Quirky Vintage**
The Deadly Duo From Kawai
by Bob Cianci

12 **State of the Union**
Me and My Martin Tiple
by Dave Belzer

14 **The One That Didn't Get Away**
1975 Gibson Ripper Bass – The Start of it All
by Rick King

17 **All About Amps**
by Skip Simmons

34 **Road Gold**
1920s Martin Ukulele
by Michael Elsner

36 **The Fretboard Less Traveled**
by Rich Severson

38 **So You Want to Be A Musician**
Q&A (Part 1)
by Michael Elsner

42 **Pedal Snapshot**
by Phil Traina

46 **4 Requirements for a Great Lead Player**
by Tom Jackson

50 **View of the Day**
Kelly Black, Session Guitarist
by Dave Cleveland

53 **Editor's Inbox**
California Dreamin' 000-45 Style

REVIEWS

8 **Knaggs Severn Trembuck – Tier 2 – Electric Guitar**
by Bruce Adolph

18 **Gold Tone MicroBass**
by Steve Mercer

32 **X Marks the Spot with Martin's New Ed Sheeran X Signature Model Guitar**
by Eric Dahl

48 **DPA Microphones d:vote 4099G Instrument Microphone**
by Jack Mao

Knaggs Severn Trembuck – Tier 2 – Electric Guitar

by Bruce Adolph

OK, I have limited room and a lot so say about this Knaggs guitar, so let's start with a very brief overview of this company. Joe Knaggs has worked 24 years at PRS and ended up reaching the position of Director of R&D and Private Stock. Co-founder of Knaggs Guitars is Peter Wolf, who has been working with PRS for 23 years as well and eventually became their Director of Global Sales & Marketing. The pair started at the end of 2009 and set out to build a new high-end guitar company consisting of a team of experienced builders (that actually is located not that far away from their PRS stomping grounds). Are you keeping up? Talent + industry and artists relations = street cred.

Here is what you need to know next. They designed two lines of guitars: The Influence series, with solid Mahogany bodies, carved Maple tops, set Mahogany necks, 24.75" scales, solid and hollow bodies; and the Chesapeake line, with single and double cutaway beveled tops and 25.5" scales, each with their own Tier system (Tier 1 providing the most exotic woods and appointments, Tier 2 being in the middle and Tier 3 with more standard features but all equally well made with the same attention to detail and care). The guitars are named after American Indian river names.

We are playing/reviewing a Tier 2 Severn Trembuck. This guitar was made less than two months ago and comes with an alder back and a quilted Maple top, a set curly rock maple neck and fretboard, a graphite nut, nickel-plating, Gotoh locking tuners, and Dunlop strap locks.

The bridge is one component Joe believes he has some advantage with his own design. It drives increased string vibration into the center of the body, thus creating more sustain and harmonics. The two humbucker pick-ups (Seymour Duncan TB4/SH2N) are controlled by a three-way blade selector switch and share one volume and one tone knob with a pull function for coil tapping.

I plugged the Knaggs into a 59' Fender Tremolux and a Crate Vintage Club 30 (chock full of tubes) with an English Celestion in it, and what I got from these hot-rodded humbuckers was plenty of output without losing the all-important tone. You get a good blend of harmonics, sustain, and distortion when driving them hard, and they clean up and sound warm and sweet when you want sweet. These pick-ups respond and sound very close to the ever-popular Jeff Beck pick-ups by Seymour Duncan. The aggressive output translates well for everything from blues, to rock, to metal.

The finish color on this Severn Trembuck is called "Dusk", and has the coolest use of the gem turquoise I have ever seen in a guitar finish. It gives this guitar an impressive look. It appears that Joe and his team filled several artistically cut holes in the top of the guitar with real turquoise and then shot the finish over it. It feels smooth as can be but looks marvelous in person.

I have reviewed electric guitars before by well-known builders that had a price tag much higher than this one, and I would take this guitar hands down over those.

This "well-balanced" in your hands instrument weighs in at 7.4 pounds and comes with a very well made rectangular hardshell case with the Knaggs logo silkscreened on it.

The summary? This Knaggs is well-made, expensive but worth it, and most of all… a literal joy to play.

www.knaggsguitars.com
Suggested Retail $6,201.00

FLY with Confidence

Lightweight keeps Guitar & Case under 50lbs.

***Watertight**

Superior Protection

Lifetime Warranty

TSA
Accepted Locking Latches

INDESTRUCTIBLE

3i-4719-35

SKB iSeries 335 shaped Flight Case
Also available for Acoustic Dreadnought, Jumbo Acoustic, Classical Guitars, Strat/Tele Electrics, Les Paul® & SG® Style Guitars and PRS Solid Bodies.

TSA-Accepted Locking Latches

MADE IN USA

i series SKB ORANGE, CA

Gibson Trademarks are owned by Gibson Guitar Corp. and SKB is in no way affiliated with Gibson Guitar Corp.

QUIRKY VINTAGE

by Bob Cianci

The Deadly Duo From Kawai

This time, we'll examine what I call "The Deadly Duo From Kawai", from one of Japan's most well known electric guitar builders. Kawai was, without a doubt, one of the largest manufacturers of student grade electric guitars in the Swinging '60's, with over two hundred electric guitar models and as many as fifty brand names, including Kingston, the name that appears on both these guitars. First, let's look at some information about Kawai itself.

Kawai was known as a maker of solidly made pianos dating back to 1927. During the 1950's, they began manufacturing acoustic and classical guitars and jumped into the electric guitar game in 1963, in partnership with Teisco, an association that proved short-lived. The corporate honchos at Kawai quickly realized they could produce their own electric guitars, and within a few months, they began building them at their location in Enshu, which had been used previously to make pianos.

Kawai's wide distribution and export connections aided the company in establishing deals with American retail outlets after the NAMM show in January of 1965. From then on, Kawai's production and presence in the market increased at an astounding rate. Kawai's largest customers were U.S. department stores like Sears and Woolworth's (I cannot imagine buying a guitar in a Five & Dime store for some reason), as well as smaller music stores and chain retailers. Apparently, American buyers would bring actual high-end guitars to Kawai for them to copy, thereby offering a cheaper alternative to American models. Kawai was all too happy to oblige.

In 1966, Kawai bought out Shinko Gakki, a smaller Japanese guitar company, and in 1967, they pulled off a major coup by acquiring Teisco. Also in 1967, Kawai began producing guitar bodies for MCA Corporation, which had recently bought Danelectro. The Coral line of Danelectro lookalikes feature Kawai bodies. Later, Kawai made Fernandes guitars.

Kawai guitars became increasingly varied and sometimes downright bizarre as the 60's progressed. There were copies of the Vox Phantom and Teardrop, a wacky model called the California Rebel that looks like a grossly misshapen cereal box, and a copy of the EKO Rokes model known as the Flying Wedge. Kawai even made a 6-string electric with a round banjo body that carried the brand names Winston and Splendor. These are exceedingly rare, as is the Kingston Concert model, one of which recently sold for almost two thousand bucks. Other models aped Mosrite and Burns, as well as various violin shapes. Another weird Kawai model known as the 2TPL resembled the infamous Hallmark Swept Wing! This guitar was distributed by a company called G & H Imports from Lodi, New Jersey.

But, let's get back to the models at hand. Both of these prizes are from my collection, and looking them over, you will immediately note that the bodies are identical, but the headstocks and necks are actually as different as night and day. The three pickup model is known as the S3T. Most of them came in a sunburst finish; the cream white finish is harder to find and very attractive with its tortoiseshell pickguard. The neck on this guitar is a very slim C shape with a volute at the headstock to protect against breakage. The headstock face has a very thin veneer of beautiful flame maple, not often seen on guitars at this price range. There are three single coil low output pickups, complete with three corresponding slide switches, and a volume and tone knob. The whammy bar is long gone, as is often the case. The guitar was an eBay purchase, and has yet to find its place in my arsenal of guitars. I think it might fare well as a surf music instrument, but then again, I don't play surf music. Admittedly, I bought it on a whim because it was close in appearance to the other guitar you see in the photo.

The S3T's cousin, which I presume was named the S1T, is my number one dedicated slide guitar, a regular fire-breathing dragon, a raging beast that I gig regularly. It allows me to dredge up the ghosts of Hound Dog Taylor, Elmore James, and a hundred more slash and burn slide guitarists. Think a funky blues joint on the Southside of Chicago, or the Mississippi Hill Country. The feel and vibe of this guitar, as well as the raw sound, paired with some overdrive or fuzz, will tear your face off at fifty paces, and the pickup doesn't squeal at higher volume. Although the body is the same as the S3T, the neck is the fattest "baseball bat" I have ever encountered on an electric guitar in all my years of playing, studying, examining, and researching guitars, yet it is very comfortable to play. It was set up strictly for slide, with very high action by master luthiers David and Phil Petillo from Ocean Township, New Jersey. The whammy bar was in place when I bought it for $189 off eBay, but it was so long that David cut off at least three to four inches to make it manageable. The control knobs are not original, and I added the waterslide '40's pinup girl decal just for fun. There's just something about those Vargas girls that gets me every time.

In closing, let me add that I am currently on the lookout for an S2T and a four pickup S4T in the white finish. To this date, I have never encountered either one, although the sunburst variation is quite common on both, and I have also seen them in bright red.

Next time, we'll look at another very quirky offering from Kawai called the Sorrento Swinger that brings back memories of a failed Fender design.

The author wishes to thank Japanese guitar aficionado Frank Meyers for information from his great book, History of Japanese Electric Guitars, which is available wherever books are sold. If you like those quirky '60's Japanese guitars, Frank's book is a must-read.

Bob Cianci is a lifelong musician, music journalist, and author of the book, Great Rock Drummers of The Sixties, and has written extensively for many guitar and drum publications, newspapers, websites, and fanzines. He is a working guitarist and drummer in three bands in New Jersey. His guitar collection numbers over twenty-five pieces at the moment, and is constantly evolving.

GIBSON CUSTOM AT SWEETWATER

Gibson CUSTOM

Les Paul Collector's
Choice #12 – 1957 Goldtop

Item ID: LP57CC12AGNH
Serial #: CC12A042

'57 Les Paul Goldtop VOS
with Bigsby – Antique Gold

Item ID: LPR7RVAGNBPTR
Serial #: 74076

SG Standard –
Heavy Aged TV Yellow

Item ID: SGSRRHTVNHPTR
Serial #: 041082

Visit our exclusive Guitar Gallery for more detailed hi-res images at Sweetwater.com/guitargallery

Sweetwater®
Music Instruments & Pro Audio

(800) 222-4700
Sweetwater.com

FREE 2-YEAR WARRANTY*
Total Confidence Coverage™ Warranty

FAST, FREE SHIPPING
On most orders, with no minimum purchase

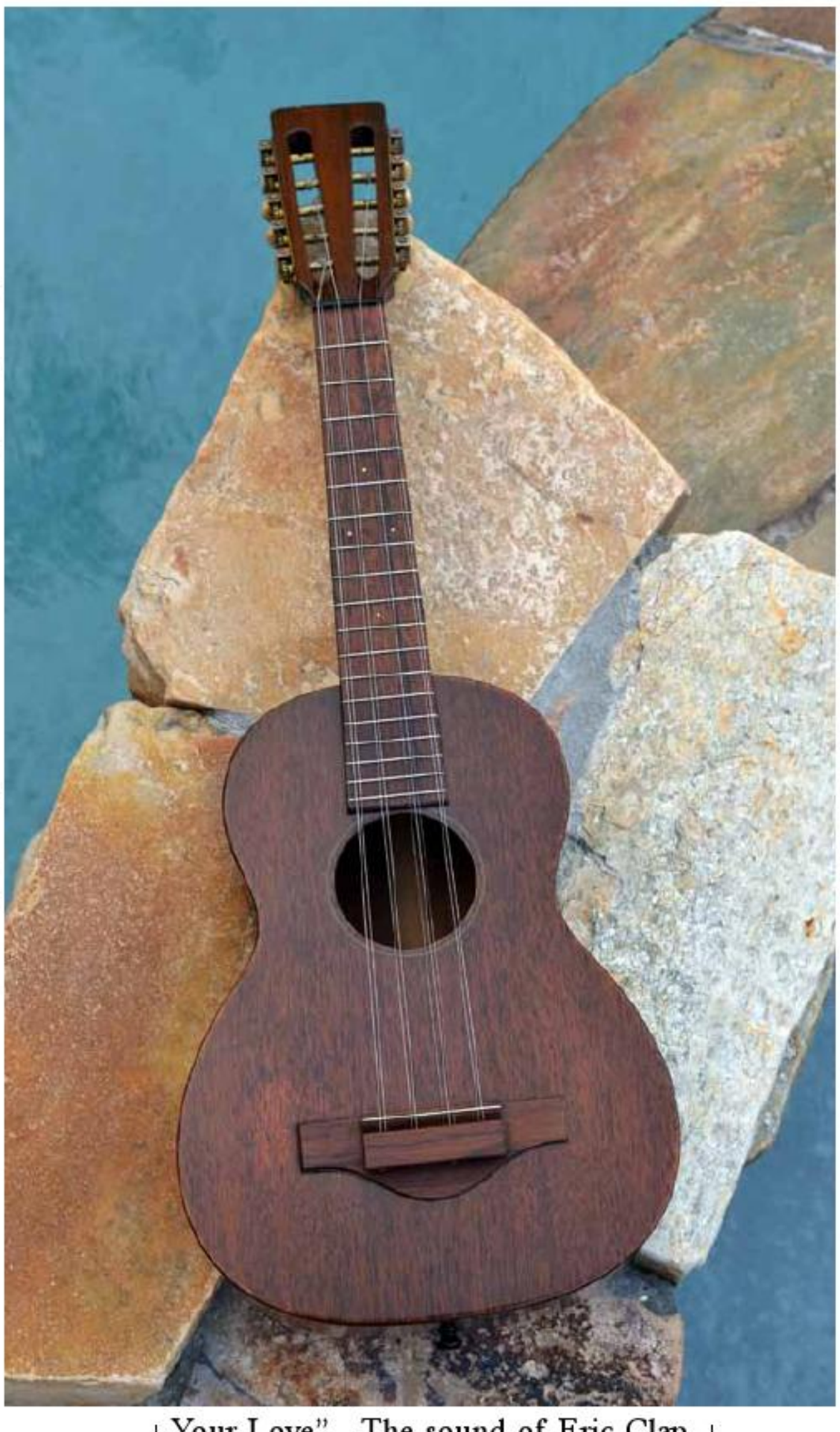
SPECIAL FINANCING
We offer many flexible payment options

*Please note: Apple products are excluded from this warranty, and other restrictions may apply. Please visit Sweetwater.com/warranty for complete details.

STATE OF THE UNION

by David Belzer

Me and My Martin Tiple



I was a lucky kid being born in 1959 and growing up in the 60's and 70's. I was lucky to experience many different styles of music from many diverse sources, all of them having an impact on the direction of my life.

Of course, no matter what the type of music it was or from whatever medium it was coming from (radio, records, live shows or TV), I was always drawn immediately to the guitar player. The guitar player was IT for me. He had it all, visual, kinetic, auditory, sight, motion, and yes, above all, SOUND. Something about the tone of the guitar always made my head turn and my ear perk up. Whether it was Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs playing "The Ballad of Jed Clampett" on the TV show Beverly Hillbillies, or a riff maybe Tommy Tedesco played on some TV theme, I'd always get a slight chill up my spine.

Back then in the early 70's it was not uncommon to see someone like Roy Clark appear on an episode of "The Odd Couple" and just tear it up. I vividly remember a duet between Roy Clark and Glen Campbell on some late night show and they were sharing just one guitar with Roy playing the rhythm part low on the neck and Glen playing lead way up high. To a ten-year old kid, it was jaw dropping.

I know... what does this have to do with a Tiple and what the heck is a Tiple anyway? I will get to that, I promise.

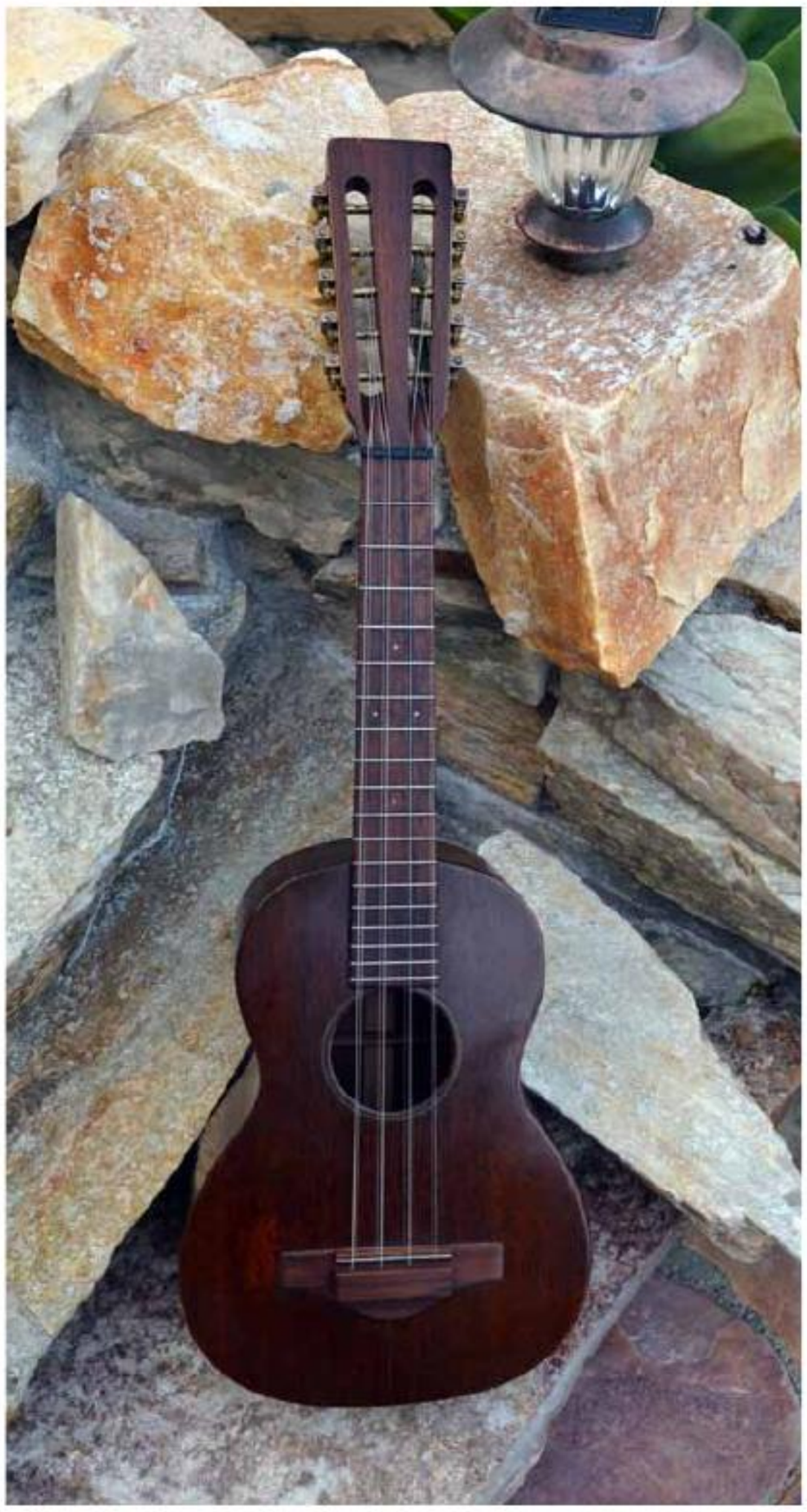
I guess if I had to name one song or guitar tone that really did me in and was a major direction changer in my life it would have to be the song "Sunshine of Your Love". The sound of Eric Clapton's guitar during that period grabbed me like no other and really has never let go. It led me to every other tone monster out there from Duane Allman to Leslie West and dozens of others in between and after. I loved them all, and there was something to learn from each of them.

It was that search of tone that lead me to research what instruments and amplification these tone giants used. With the help of a Christmas present in 1973 from my parents of Tom Wheeler's book, "The American Guitar" (which I cherish to this day), and George Gruhn's newsletters and articles in Guitar Player Magazine, my path to knowledge began. Thank you George and Tom. All of us with a passion for vintage guitars owe you both a great deal of gratitude. While I'm at it I also would like to thank Stan Jay of Mandolin Bros. Rest in peace Stan. When I was just twenty-something and had a music store in the 80's on Long Island, Stan was always there to help. Whenever something walked in that I hadn't a clue about, Stan was always just a phone call away with a wealth of knowledge and always willing to share it.

Of course, no book is anything like hands on experience, and it really wasn't until about 1980 when I got my hands on my first '59 burst. It was then that I, shall we say, "got it" and realized what a great electric guitar really was all about and just how much it differed from what Gibson had been offering for the last decade or so.

So my path was set and off I went buying and selling vintage guitars. Eventually I hooked up with the incomparable Andrew Berlin and we became known as the "Burst Brothers", nicknamed after the '58-'60 Les Paul Standards we were buying and selling. Ah, but I digress. What does this have to do with a Tiple and what the heck is a Tiple?

According to Mike Longworth's book "Martin Co. A History", Tiple is a Spanish word meaning "small guitar". As a folk instrument in Argentina it was strung with ten gut strings, tuned to guitar pitch. There are many variations of the tiple (different body sizes and shapes and string arrangements) in history, going back to the 16th century in Argentina, Puerto Rico, and Spain.



C.F. Martin redesigned the tiple in 1919, using their obsolete quarter-size guitar patterns, (smaller than the Argentinian version), with ten steel strings and tuned to ukulele pitch - A, D, F#, B. The first and fourth strings are doubled like a mandolin, while the second and third are triple with the center sting tuned an octave below.

And what could this have to do with all my stories of the past?

When I heard a tiple for the first time, it grabbed me with the same magnetic power that all those guitar greats had inspired in me years ago. Just when I thought I'd heard it all! And thus began my love affair with the tiple.

Recently one Saturday afternoon, my mailman Tim came walking up my driveway with a 2-½ foot long box in his hand. A grin came to my face as I remembered that a few days earlier I had been on Ebay and purchased what was advertised to be a 1928 Martin Tiple in excellent condition. Normally I would be the first person to advise caution when buying instruments from Ebay, but this looked so interesting and clean that I had to bid. In fifteen years as a member of Ebay and having done many transactions, this was the first musical instrument I had purchased online.

Well, to my surprise, I had more enthusiasm opening that box and popping the case lid on that Tiple than I had opening the last ten solid body guitar cases I've opened. I was pleasantly surprised when it was just as described and as the pictures showed, in excellent condition. I could not wait to get it in tune and compare it with a 1968 T-28 Tiple (same features as a Martin style-28 guitar) which I had acquired in the last year. Tiples have a very unique sound that is very pleasant and stands on it's own with regards to tone and place when paired with other stringed instruments.

The point I am trying to make is that you never know what's going to grab you, shake you, and inspire you. I'm still a devoted guitar guy, but I have been seduced by the sound of this unique and magical little tiple. The instruments coming out of that era have so much uniqueness and personality that it really can't be put into words. It can really only be experienced by having them in your hand and playing them. Who knows? Later tonight maybe I'll plug an old Strat into a Tweed Deluxe... but for now, it's Tiple time!

David Belzer is one of the top vintage guitar authorities in the world, with over 30 years of experience in vintage. His knowledge of vintage guitars is only exceeded by his passion for playing them.

For more information or to contact him directly, visit www.burstbrothers.com

SOUND synergies
HEAR AND FEEL THE DIFFERENCE™
Superior Maintenance Products that Enhance Sound Quality & Instrument Playability
Your Music Gear Lost its Punch?
Punch Back...
...with SoundSynergies® Simple, Easy, Fast™ music gear maintenance products.
• One-Step application affordably restores sound clarity and responsive feel of musical instruments and electronics
• Conditions and lubricates nearly every type of instrument and electronic gear
• The first spray-on products to improve dynamics and sound quality
Reclaim your music gear's full potential at... SoundSynergies.net today!!
STRINGTone
LECTRICare
PROcussionCare
BRITETone
For all product details scan QR code or type in: www.soundsynergies.net
Learn more about our products at soundsynergies.net. Products from DynaGlide® laboratories a division of Multi-Marketing Corporation. Made in the USA.
dyna Glide
Dealers/Distributors inquiries:
Jim: jammc@harbornet.com
Russ: reedville85@comcast.net

THE ONE THAT DIDN'T GET AWAY

by Rick King

1975 Gibson Ripper Bass – The Start of it All

I am so proud of our daughter, Ava. She recently graduated from Washington State University with a degree in Environmental Science. After she sent out her graduation announcements, I got a call from Dawn Powell, an old girlfriend, who has remained close to our family for many years. She left a message stating that she recently married her longtime boyfriend Bill, and that she wanted to send something to Ava.

A couple of weeks had passed, but I had not returned her call. I had gotten busy with the Tacoma Guitar festival, and then preparing for the Dallas International Guitar show immediately after. While I stood in line to get my exhibitors packet at the Dallas show, I got another call from Dawn. I cut her call short because I was next in line to receive my credentials. I quickly rattled off our address and said I had to go. She said, in a very upbeat voice, to give her a call when I had time because she had been diagnosed with a rare form of cancer and she had been undergoing chemotherapy. When she hung up, I felt terrible. As I walked back to my booth I had many thoughts, but the one that I couldn't get out of my head was of a day in September 1981 when Dawn and I were driving to the Western Washington State Fair. Earlier that day, I saw an ad for a Gibson Ripper Bass for $100. It was in Puyallup, WA where the fair was taking place. I bought the guitar on the way and hid it underneath blankets in the back of my car and then off to the fair we went. I kept the bass for a while, and later traded it to Monte Vista Guitar Shop in Tacoma, for what... I can't remember. That bass was the beginning of my guitar trading career.

photos by Joe Riggio

As I may have mentioned before, I opened my store at 752 Saint Helens in July of 1990. It was a whopping 800 square feet, like a cave with low ceilings. Little did I know that all of the local bands that I went to go see and loved would start a music revolution. We sold a lot of stuff to Nirvana, and I felt closest to Krist Novoselic. I initially sold him a couple of Ripper basses. They were not particularly popular at the time, but he said he liked them because Gene Simmons played them in Kiss. Krist mentioned that he bought a Ripper bass in the early 80's at Monte Vista Guitar Shop. I relayed my story about the first guitar I bought, and getting rid of it to Monte Vista around that exact same time. I asked him if it appeared to be refinished and possibly set down on something while it was not fully dry on the back. He felt that maybe it was refinished, and we both agreed that it was probably the same bass. I asked him if he still had it. He said no, and that he had smashed it to pieces years before. Case closed.

In the late 1990's a customer of ours got into some financial trouble and needed to liquidate his recording studio full of gear. I was apprehensive about buying it all, because studio gear wasn't my specialty.

I found an outlet for the studio gear, which would pay off the initial $5000 investment, leaving a couple of amps and a Gibson Bass as the profit. Not a huge profit at the time, but I realized that it would greatly help someone in desperate need, and I could get rid of the studio gear immediately. I did the deal. When I opened up the bass case, I was disappointed in the Gibson Ripper. The black pickguard was missing, and a single ply tortoise shell pickguard was in its place. The wiring harness had been modified also. Instead of two pots and a rotary switch, three pots replaced the old harness. A volume knob for each pick up and a master tone knob. A cool set up nonetheless, but it was not original. I was bummed out. Looking past the modifications, at the refinish job, I noticed some deep sanding marks at either side of the fingerboard, as it enters the body. My heart raced as I flipped the guitar over to reveal the area that appeared to have been set down on something before the paint had cured. It was the bass I bought with Dawn in September of 1981. My original acquisition had come back! I decided to leave the harness the way I got it because this too is part of its history. One hell of a boomerang story of my first guitar purchase making its way back home.

Rick King is the owner of Guitar Maniacs in Tacoma Washington. He lives in Gig Harbor with his wife Sheila, two dogs and a cat. Contact Rick: rickking58@gmail.com

SOUND synergies
HEAR AND FEEL THE DIFFERENCE™
Superior Maintenance Products that Enhance Sound Quality & Instrument Playability
It Just Sounds Better with SoundSynergies®
Experience the revolutionary new way to restore and maintain your gear's performance
- Music industry's first micro-particle maintenance formulas
- Scientifically engineered products for strings, percussion, brass/winds, and electronics
- Lubricant micro-particles eliminate grime and corrosion
- Restore your gear's look, sound, and feel to pristine condition
Discover the SoundSynergies® difference
Visit... SoundSynergies.net today!!
For all product details scan QR code or type in: www.soundsynergies.net
Learn more about our products at soundsynergies.net. Products from DynaGlide® laboratories a division of Multi-Marketing Corporation. Made in the USA.
dynaGlide
Dealers/Distributors inquiries:
Jim: jammc@harbornet.com
Russ: reedville85@comcast.net

COLLECTORS OF FINE GUITARS

Musical instruments are your passion. Protecting them is ours.

We'll give your new & vintage guitars the worldwide protection they deserve.

For over 20 years, fine musical instrument players, collectors, builders and sellers have depended on Heritage to customize a comprehensive, affordable insurance policy for their needs. It's time you joined them!

Nobody appreciates fine guitars like Heritage. That's why we're committed to protecting your instruments from damage and theft on a worldwide basis. We have flexible, affordable policies that are customized to meet your needs.

- All Risk of Direct Physical Damage
- Consequential Loss in Value Due to Breakage
- Agreed Value - Your Value is Guaranteed
- Shipping and Air Cargo
- Worldwide Coverage
- Minimal Exclusions
- Fast & Fair Claim Service
- Top Rated U.S. Insurers

HERITAGE
INSURANCE SERVICES, INC.

A culture of commitment. A tradition of trust.

Call or e-mail to ask about the best coverage in the industry.

1-800-289-8837 info@musicins.com

www.musicins.com 1.800.289.8837

ALL ABOUT AMPS

with Skip Simmons

Q&A

If I change my tubes do I have to have my amp re-biased?

As is often the case, the answer is not a simple yes or no. Many smaller or older amps use a circuit that is called "cathode-biased." This means that the bias of the power tubes is controlled by a fixed-value resistor between the cathode and ground. Amps that use this circuit will almost never require re-biasing regardless of what power tubes are used. Most amps that under 20 watts use this system. A couple of notable exceptions would be the post-tweed Fender Princetons and Deluxes.

The other common biasing method is called "fixed-bias." In this circuit, the cathodes of the power tubes are connected directly to ground and the bias is regulated by a dedicated "negative voltage" that is applied to the grids of the power tubes. If you are replacing power tubes, this method of biasing is much more sensitive. Different brands or types of power tubes may bias very differently, so it is an excellent idea to have the bias checked (but not necessarily changed) in amps using fixed-bias.

Beginning in the early sixties, Fender, Marshall, and many others began to include a potentiometer in the negative-voltage circuit creating "adjustable fixed-bias." This admittedly confusing name merely means that the amp uses a traditional fixed-bias circuit with a potentiometer added as a way to vary the negative voltage and therefore, the bias of the power tubes. Again, when changing power tubes in an amp like this, it is a very good idea to have the bias checked and possibly adjusted to insure good tone and long tube-life.

And finally, here's one thing you don't have to worry about! This information refers to power tubes - preamp tubes never need re-biasing.

I really want to get an old amp but most of the ones I see are so expensive. Are there any old and cool vintage amps that I can get for less than $1000?

I could spent a week on this one! First of all, if you don't mind lifting a

continued on page 40

SOUND synergies
HEAR AND FEEL THE DIFFERENCE™
Superior Maintenance Products that Enhance Sound Quality & Instrument Playability
Better Maintenance means Better Performance. True that!
For musicians and sound techs who demand the best.
• Engineered for superior sound and performance
• New, unique lubricant and conditioning products for most instruments & electronics
• One-step, easy, quick and low-cost application
• Performance proven in lab tests
Discover the new must-have music accessory maintenance products at... SoundSynergies.net today!!
For all product details scan QR code or type in: www.soundsynergies.net
Learn more about our products at soundsynergies.net. Products from DynaGlide® laboratories a division of Multi-Marketing Corporation. Made in the USA.
dyna Glide
Dealers/Distributors inquiries:
Jim: jammc@harbornet.com
Russ: reedville85@comcast.net

Gold Tone MicroBass

by Steve Mercer

As a singer-songwriter and guitarist, I was looking for a bass to use for recording and for small gigs. And, while the idealist in me wants that big, beautiful slap and thump of an upright, the cost (and lack of portability) is guaranteed to keep it on my long-term wish list. So what's the best way to get that resonant thump and keep within my price and portability parameters?

Compact basses have been around for years. Guild came up with one in the 1980s—short-scaled and fretless with synthetic strings—but it had its faults, including intonation issues. Maintaining intonation can still be a challenge with some of the small basses sold today.

Gold Tone's latest evolution of the compact bass concept is a 23-inch short-scaled acoustic-electric bass guitar with Aquila synthetic strings and an active piezo transducer pickup. An improvement over many earlier attempts, the longer scale length addresses the intonation problem and its sloped "ergo-glide" top makes it more comfortable to hold.

The Gold Tone MicroBass sports an onboard pre-amp with master volume and independent bass and treble tone controls. It also has a built-in electronic tuner. It comes in several versions, including both fretless and fretted, as well as a longer (25-inch) scale length and even a solid body.

Gold Tone provided a 23-inch fretless acoustic-electric model for this review. It is has a satin-finished mahogany hollow body and a C-shaped set mahogany neck. The rosewood fretboard has dot inlays and the 1 11/16-inch bone nut made string spacing comfortable. The open-geared tuning machines turned smoothly with a light touch. The MicroBass has an MSRP of $525 but it can be found for under $400 with a nicely padded gig bag.

My first surprise when I took the bass out of the bag was the feather weight. It weighs in at under three pounds. I had to button on a strap and try it on just to see what it felt like. It was very comfortable—I could play it all night long.

Tuning, because of the synthetic strings, is unusual. To keep them from stretching unevenly, you grab the string and pull it away from the nut as you turn the tuning machine. It takes a bit of getting used to, but it's very easy and soon seems almost normal. The strings stretched quite a bit for the first couple of days but after the break-in period they stayed in tune remarkably well.

Playing on synthetic strings also takes some getting used to. Easy on the fingers, it just took a light touch. But when I tried sliding down the fretboard my fingers stuck and squeaked. All it took was a bit of talcum powder and I was back in business.

I mentioned earlier that the fretboard had dot inlays. It also has inlayed strips of lighter wood to mark where the frets would have been placed. And, I was delighted to discover, they added beautifully-placed reference dots on the side of the fretboard. Instead of placement between the appropriate frets (as with fretted fingerboards), these markers are placed where you actually note a fretless. Nicely done!

Unplugged, its low thump has a great woody tone. Its small dreadnaught-shaped body has plenty of volume for solo practice, but it can quickly get overpowered when joined by other players. Playing through an amp or PA is where the MicroBass really shines.

Plugging in was an interesting experience at first. Inserting an instrument cable into the jack automatically mutes the output and turns on the tuner. Hmm… no sound. I fumbled for a moment until I found the small button just below the volume pot. One quick press of the button and I was in business.

Plugged in it comes alive with a lovely low thump. The onboard EQ allows you to dial in more crispness or bottom, but it worked best for me to keep the treble low. I want to approximate the sound of an upright and adding treble took me in the wrong direction. Keeping the treble down and the bass slider near the top resulted in a lush, fat, round tone while maintaining that acoustic vibe, no effects needed. Played through an amp or just straight to the front of house, it did a very nice job approximating that upright I was pining for. This is a bass that is bound to become a favorite as more players discover the quality and versatility of this micro-sized beast.

Steve Mercer has been a guitar nut nearly all of his life. He lives in Tacoma, Washington with his wife, with whom he writes, plays, and sings post-industrial folk music.

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

KNAGGS™

GUITARS

Creation Series™ instruments are one of a kind
never to be replicated.
We look forward to building one for you.
www.knaggsguitars.com

Creation Series™ serial #5
"The Mating Dance"

www.mo-ka.net (photo: Larry Melton)

Imagine Finding John Lennon's Long Lost Gibson J-160E

Last year, someone did . . . then realized he'd had it for 46 years!

The story of how John Lennon's Gibson J-160E was discovered, as told exclusively to **Collectible Guitar – Then and Now** *by John McCaw, the man who "took care of it" for 46 years.*

By Gabriel J. Hernandez

photo by Tony Barakis

John McCaw (seated) with Marc Intravaia

"Seems like yesterday, back in '64,
I watched John, Paul, George, & Ringo
From that round rug on our floor.
And that blues harp, there in "Love Me Do,"
Hit me right between the ears.
And I've been down this "Long And Winding Road,"
For 40 something years …"

- "40 Something Years" (1st verse) by Glenn Ashworth & T.J. Klay

The words to the song above were written nearly 10 years ago by longtime musicians Glenn Ashworth and T.J. Klay, yet they couldn't ring truer than they do today regarding the story of San Diego, California native John McCaw, and one very special vintage Gibson acoustic guitar that's been in his possession for the last 46 years.

Suffice it to say, this remarkable tale is definitely one for the ages, especially when it comes to the guitar; which unless you've been living under a rock, you already know is John Lennon's long lost 1962 Gibson J-160E with a Sunburst finish. The guitar – missing since December 1963 – is set to be sold to the highest bidder the weekend of Nov. 6-7, 2015, at Julien's Auctions in Beverly Hills, California. Pre-auction estimates predict the guitar will fetch somewhere in the neighborhood of $600,000 - $800,000.

This incredibly historic Gibson acoustic guitar was one of two ordered by The Beatles' manager, Brian Epstein, in early 1962 through Rushworth's music store in Liverpool, England. Both guitars – one for Lennon, the other for George Harrison – were shipped by Gibson on June 27, 1962, and arrived at Rushworth's in either late August or early September of 1962. They were picked up by Epstein and The Beatles during that first week of September, with Lennon and Harrison returning to the music store on Sept. 10, 1962 to take a few promotional photos for the music store with the guitars.

From there the rest is, well, history. The journey of both guitars – but especially the one used extensively by Lennon – is nothing short of extraordinary. On Sept. 11, 1962, just one day after the photo-op at Rushmore's, The Beatles returned to EMI's Abbey Road Studio 2 in London to finish recording "Love Me Do," which they later released on Oct. 5, 1962 as their very first British single. It's not clear if either of the two "new" guitars were used during those sessions, but it is well documented that both guitars – especially Lennon's – very quickly became an integral part of The Beatles' early sound.

Andy Babiuk, owner of Andy Babiuk's Fab Gear in Rochester, New York, and author of the critically acclaimed book *Beatles Gear-All The Fab Four's Instruments From Stage To Studio*, said Lennon used his new 1962 Gibson J-160E acoustic guitar exclusively on many of the songs recorded by the band during late 1962 and throughout 1963. Lennon is also said to have used this particular guitar during many of his early writing sessions with Paul McCartney – sessions that produced some of The Beatles' most popular and iconic early albums and hit singles, including "She Loves You," "I Want To Hold Your Hand," "Please, Please, Me," "All My Loving," "From Me To You," and "This Boy." The guitar was also featured prominently in the films *Help* and *Hard Day's Night*, plus countless videos promoting the singles and other live performances.

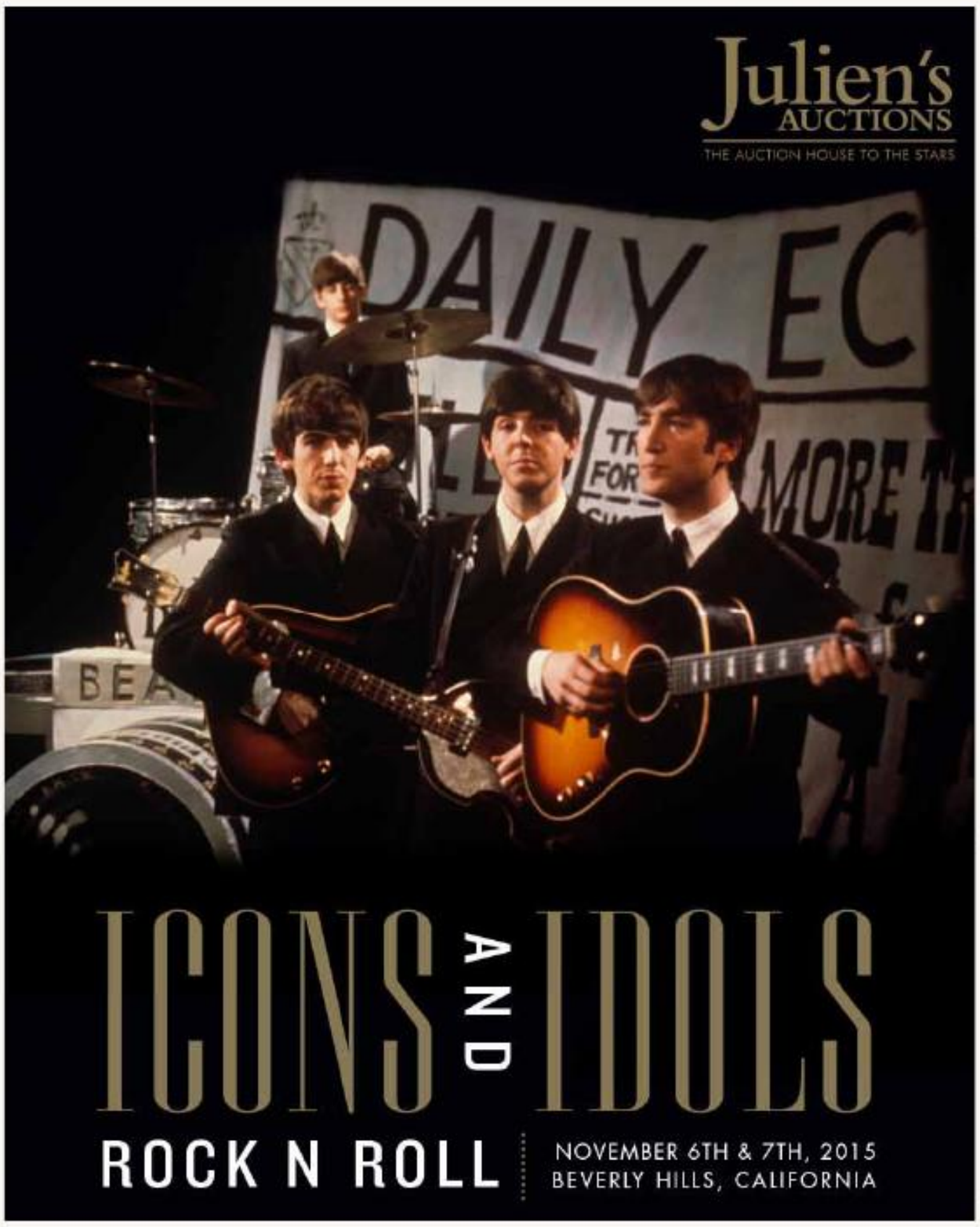
"There is no doubt that this guitar was Lennon's most important guitar in the early days of The Beatles," Babiuk said. "He used it live, he used it in the studio to cut a lot of the band's early hits, and he wrote a ton of great songs with it."

Babiuk, who said he receives calls on a daily basis from "people who think they have a piece of gear that was once used by The Beatles," went even further in describing the historical significance of this particular guitar.

photo credit: Julien's Auctions

"I've been doing this for a very long time," Babiuk said in a voice trembling with obvious emotion. "All I can tell you is that this guitar is, without a doubt, the most important guitar that's ever gone up for auction. I can't tell you how much it's going to sell for, and frankly I don't think anyone can. But I can tell you that there has never been another guitar like this one offered up for auction."

Babiuk continued, "This is not a guitar that Lennon used in passing, or one of many he owned. This was his number one instrument during what is arguably the most important time in Beatles' history. It can be argued that this was one of the most important times in the history of music! The wear marks that Lennon himself put on this guitar are still all over it. This guitar is just so cool on so many different levels."



For the record, Babiuk was also the person McCaw eventually turned to when he realized the acoustic he'd owned and played for 46 years bore a striking resemblance to the one Lennon played in the early 1960s.

But how did this guitar make its way from Liverpool to San Diego? And perhaps more importantly, how did it end up in McCaw's possession? The story of this guitar's journey is almost as legendary as the guitar itself. But it's also as mysterious as it is complex; as magical as it is complicated; yet also as comprehensible as it is simple.

In order to correctly address these questions, however, one has to go back to the very beginning (sort of), and examine the facts – what little does exist – regarding *what* actually happened to Lennon's guitar. Because ever since Reuters first broke the story of the guitar's return to existence during the first week of June, these details – or lack thereof, depending on your perspective – are the current hot topics of much discussion, speculation, and misinformation all over the Internet … so much so that they threaten to overshadow the reality that this wonderfully historic guitar has been found, and still – in fact – exists!

Of course, the story was picked up by nearly every major media outlet around the world, and in almost every comment section of every story written there exists much debate as to whether "…the guitar was stolen," or whether "…it should be returned to Sean or Julian Lennon," or the "…Lennon estate," etc. There are also plenty of people wrongfully speculating about "police reports" and "insurance claims." There's been no shortage of opinions about what McCaw should or shouldn't do with the guitar, and for this very reason he has remained silent. At least until now (we'll get to him in a minute).

The bulk of available information on the history of Lennon's lost Gibson J-160E acoustic guitar can be found in two books. The first is Babiuk's *Beatles Gear-All The Fab Four's Instruments From Stage To Studio*, and the second is *The Beatles Anthology*, written by … well, The Beatles themselves (Paul, George, and Ringo). The latter book was first published in 2000, and was a collaborative effort between Paul McCartney, George Harrison, and Ringo Starr. Even Yoko Ono cooperated fully in the effort by adding Lennon's own words to what many consider to be the most definitive autobiographical and historically correct Beatles book ever published.

In that book, the story of Malcolm Frederick Evans, known in The Beatles' world as simply "Big Mal" (he was 6', 6" tall) or "Gentle Giant", is told with as much detail as possible. According to the book, Evans first met The Beatles while working as a telephone engineer near the legendary Cavern Club in Liverpool, where The Beatles were the resident group. Though his musical hero was Elvis Presley, Mal became a committed fan of The Beatles after hearing them during a lunch break. He later befriended George Harrison, who insisted to Cavern Club manager Ray McFall that Mal be The Beatles' doorman when one was needed. He was eventually hired by Beatles' manager Epstein to work with the band's other roadie, Neil Aspinall. Mal's primary job was to drive the van that took the band's equipment to its gigs all over the U.K.

"Around this time The Beatles were playing small clubs and theaters all around England, going from one town to another and playing almost every single night," Babiuk said. "It was Evans' job at the end of every show to gather up all the gear, pack it up in the van, and get it to the next city. The band would go to the next city in different vehicles."

According to *The Beatles Anthology*, Evans recalled his first few months on the job with The Beatles, getting acclimated to the job of handling all the gear, including Ringo's drums.

"I'd never seen a drum-kit close up before. I didn't understand any of it. Neil [Aspinall] helped me the first couple of days, but the first time I was on my own was terrible," Evans said. "It was a huge

stage and my mind went blank. I didn't know where to put anything. I asked a drummer from another group to help me. I didn't realize each drummer likes his cymbals at a special height. He did them his own way, but they were useless to Ringo."

Fast forward a couple of months to the end of 1963, when Beatles' manager Epstein had scheduled a 16-night run of two shows per night at the Astoria Theatre in Finsbury Park, North London. This incredible run of shows began on Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, 1963, and the workload for a roadie like Evans was undoubtedly grueling.

According to *The Beatles Anthology*, Evans very specifically recalled Lennon's beloved "Jumbo" guitar, and its unfortunate fate.

"The worst of all was at the Finsbury Empire in London, when I lost John's guitar," he said. "It was one he'd had for years as well. It just disappeared. 'Where's my Jumbo?' he said. I didn't know – it's still a mystery."

Lennon himself, in an interview printed in *The Beatles Monthly* in January of 1966, acknowledged that the guitar went missing sometime during that 16-day run of shows in Finsbury, but he didn't know about it until after they'd completed the string of shows.

"George and I often took a jumbo with us, so nobody noticed until the end of the season that one was missing," Lennon said. "A week or two afterwards I asked Mal where he'd put my jumbo. It was only then that we realized the guitar had been pinched, at Finsbury Park. No, I never got it back."

So for the record, Evans pretty much admitted to losing the guitar and Lennon thought it was "pinched," but didn't ask Evans about it until a few weeks after the shows were over.

"Mal left it somewhere and didn't have the guts to tell Lennon about it," Babiuk said. "Then Lennon asks him about it and that's when Mal told him he left it somewhere."

But was it stolen? Remember, Lennon himself said it had been "pinched," which is a nice English way to say something was "stolen." But some experts don't buy it.

"I honestly don't think so," Babiuk continued. "Personally I think the next band that came in and did a show there – and it could have been any one of the other big bands that were playing that same circuit at that time – they probably found the guitar, said, 'Hey, this is a cool guitar,' and took it home with them. They obviously had no idea what they had or who's it was. But maybe they did, and knowing the karma that exists between musicians maybe they traded it for something else because they didn't want to run into Lennon and have him say that they took his guitar. The fact is that no one really knows for sure."

But whether or not Babiuk or anyone else believes the guitar was stolen, the bottom line is that no one from The Beatles – not Lennon, not their manager, and not Evans – ever contacted the police to report the guitar stolen. Additionally, no claim was ever made to any insurance company for reimbursement of a lost or stolen guitar belonging to Lennon or The Beatles. The guitar was simply deemed lost by all involved, and a short time later Lennon – again through Epstein – ordered two more Gibson J-160E acoustic guitars. He would eventually give one of them to a friend, and the other Jumbo is the one he famously sanded down to its natural state, and used extensively throughout

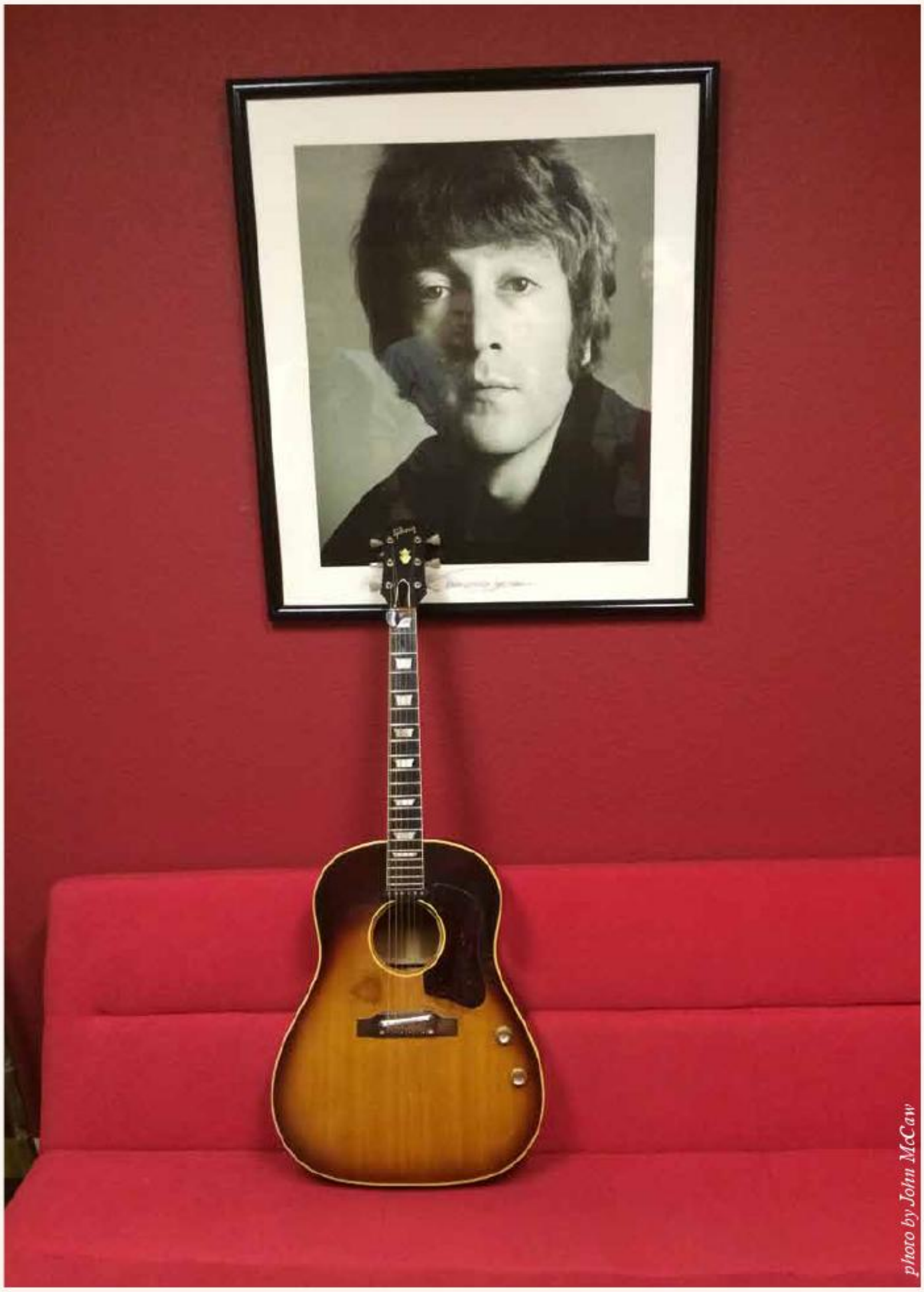


photo by John McCaw

his career until his death in 1980. This is the same J-160E he used during the infamous bed-in for peace gatherings in 1969 in Amsterdam and Montreal. Today, that guitar is still owned by the Lennon estate, and is currently on display at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio.

Some will argue guitars can "talk." But if they actually could, then we'd have a definite answer as to how Lennon's lost J-160E ended up in southern California. Unfortunately they don't, and the mystery remains. And this is where Mr. John McCaw enters the guitar's story.

"They say that dreams get started when a place inside your heart
Gets touched by something magical, then grows to be apart
Of what you set your sights on, and everything you do
Then one day you open up your eyes, and find it coming true …"

- "40 Something Years" (2nd verse) by Glenn Ashworth & T.J. Klay

One of McCaw's best friends growing up was a fellow San Diego resident by the name of Tommy Pressley. McCaw and Pressley grew up in the same section of San Diego known as Linda Vista during the 1950s and 1960s, and it was Pressley – a guitar player himself – who initially got McCaw interested in learning to play the instrument.

McCaw, however, would answer his country's calling in 1966, serving in the United States Army, First Infantry Division, for two years – one of which he spent in Vietnam, from Oct. 19, 1966 to Oct. 19, 1967. He was honorably discharged on April 25, 1968, and returned to San Diego afterwards.

"I went back to San Diego where my folks had a ranch, and my dad was a horse trainer and breeder," McCaw said. "It was part of my 'chill out' period after Vietnam, and I was helping out with the horses and around the ranch, plus we also did some horse boarding. But I also went back to junior college and got my A.A. degree."

During McCaw's time in Vietnam his friend Pressley remained in San Diego, and sometime during the summer of 1967 found himself helping a friend who owned a music store called The Blue Guitar move from one location to another.

"He helped them move to a new location, and one day he happened to walk into their repair shop and saw that guitar [Lennon's J-160E] hanging on the wall," McCaw said. "He asked about it and was told someone had come in and traded it for another guitar. The shop was going to do a quick setup on it and put it out on the floor for sale. Tommy went and talked to the store's owner about it, and ended up buying it sometime during the summer of 1967."

McCaw continued, "About a year and a half later, Tommy came to my house one day and told me he was moving to northern California and needed money for the move. He asked me if I wanted to buy his guitar, so I bought it for $175. And this was sometime in December of 1969."

After buying the guitar, McCaw simply appreciated the fact that he'd just acquired a very nice Gibson acoustic. He did admit he was aware The Beatles had used similar guitars, and probably the same model as the one he'd just purchased, but he never once gave any thought as to whether the guitar might have ever belonged to Lennon or Harrison. In fact, at that time he didn't even know Lennon's original J-160E had gone missing.

"Ever since that day, that guitar has hung on every wall of every house I've ever lived in," McCaw said.

After buying the guitar from Pressley, a few more years went by and McCaw had finally begun to settle back into a normal routine after Vietnam. He met and married his wife Cathy, and started doing sub-contracting and contracting work around the San Diego area. This eventually led him to his job today as a senior estimator and project manager for a general contracting company based in San Diego.

Over the years as he found success in his work, McCaw began to acquire other guitars, and the J-160E got less and less playing time. He still took meticulous care of the instrument – as he'd always done with all of his guitars – but he found himself not playing it as much as he used to. As the years went by, though, he also realized the guitar was becoming more of a "vintage" guitar, and that it may be worth some money. The only thing that bugged him was that he didn't know exactly how old the guitar was. So he began to try and find out.

"In March of 2008 I started a quest to find out how old the guitar was," McCaw said. "I started by posting a thread on an online Gibson forum with the serial number, the model, and some other information about the guitar, and I asked if anyone could tell me what year it was. Unfortunately, I never got one response back from that post. Not one.

"About that same time I also emailed Gibson's customer service department and sent them the serial number and the same information I'd posted on the forum," McCaw said. "They eventually did get back to me and told me their serial numbers back

STUDIO TOOLS FOR THE STAGE

INTRODUCING **SESSION** ACOUSTIC DI

Inspired by the LR Baggs Handcrafted Video Sessions and our experience in some of Nashville's great studios, **Session™ Acoustic DI** brings our new signature studio sound to your live rig. The Session DI enhances your acoustic pickup and imparts the rich sonic character that you'd expect from an experienced audio engineer using some of the world's finest studio gear. We've captured this studio magic and put it into a compact, easy-to-use DI that will transform your live sound.

FEATURES

- » Analog Saturation enhances warmth and harmonic content
- » Compression / EQ smoothes out common problem frequencies
- » Garret Null notch filter eliminates resonant feedback
- » Variable high-pass filter attenuates extraneous low frequencies
- » VU meter visually optimizes gain for passive and active pickups
- » Ground lift switch effectively eliminates ground-loop noise
- » All discrete signal path with XLR and quarter inch outputs
- » 48V phantom power, 9V battery or 9V DC powering options
- » Rugged enclosure constructed of aluminum, steel and ABS plastic
- » Includes custom LR Baggs carrying case

L.R. Baggs

Learn more at
lrbaggs.com/session

then were somewhat out of whack, but they told me it was probably manufactured sometime between 1962 and 1964. They explained the differences in the rosettes from year to year, but they still couldn't pinpoint it by serial number alone. At that point, just based on how old it was, I knew it might be worth some money, and that it was definitely a nice vintage guitar."

A few more years went by, however, before McCaw – now 69 – began to notice a few unusual "coincidences" regarding the guitar. By 2009, McCaw had also joined a small circle of friends that gathered weekly at the home of his good friend Marc Intravaia, who also happened to own a new studio in Sorrento Valley called Sanctuary Art and Music Studio. According to McCaw, everyone would bring their instruments and simply play to their heart's content. In fact, the group still gets together today. It was at the end of one of these gatherings, in May of 2014, that McCaw noticed the first unusual "coincidence."

"We had gathered at Marc's studio one week and had just finished playing and were putting our guitars away, and that's when I saw the May 2012 issue of *Guitar Aficionado* magazine sitting on Marc's book shelf," McCaw said. "That particular issue had Dhani Harrison [George Harrison's son] on the cover, and inside there were lots of pictures of his dad's guitar collection. So I was looking through it and turned the page and immediately noticed a picture of George's Jumbo that looked just like mine."

The first thing McCaw noticed was a small box next to that picture that gave a brief description of the guitar and its serial number, which is "73161."

"[The serial number] obviously got my interest because the serial number on my guitar was only four digits away," McCaw said. "So at that moment I had at least figured out that my guitar was from 1962. But I still didn't know that Lennon's guitar had gone missing."

So as McCaw continued flipping through the magazine he ran across another picture of the Harrison's Jumbo guitar, and noted something else he also thought a bit unusual.

"I noticed that Harrison's guitar had wear marks that were nearly identical to the wear marks on my guitar," McCaw said. "So I got out my magnifying glass and took a closer look and noticed just how similar they really were. I thought that was very unusual, so I continued reading the article and I read about how Harrison and Lennon had actually switched guitars at some point, and it also mentioned the story of how one of the guitars had gone missing sometime in late December of 1963."

So those three coincidences – the matching wear marks, the closeness of the serial numbers, and the fact that one of them had gone missing – were coincidences McCaw couldn't stop thinking about. He thought about it a lot for a couple of weeks and then called his friend Intravaia, who at first didn't really think too much about it.

"He didn't say much about it the first time I brought it up," McCaw said. "But another week or so went by and I kept thinking about it so much that I called Marc again and scheduled a private guitar lesson, though I never had any intention of coming in for a lesson at all. I just wanted to pick his brain about the guitar and show him all of my suspicions about the guitar."

McCaw showed up for his "lesson," and as soon as Intravaia had heard all of McCaw's suspicions he immediately turned to his computer for answers. The first search he did brought up a video on YouTube of The Beatles playing "I Wanna Hold Your Hand," which was first released in late November 1963, less than a month before their run of Christmas shows at Finbury Park in London. In the video, McCaw and Intravaia could see several excellent views of both Harrison's and Lennon's Jumbo acoustics.

"You could see fairly clearly when John moved his guitar, that the marks and dents on his guitar in the video were the same marks and dents that were on my guitar," McCaw said. "That's when Marc and I started to get pretty excited about it."

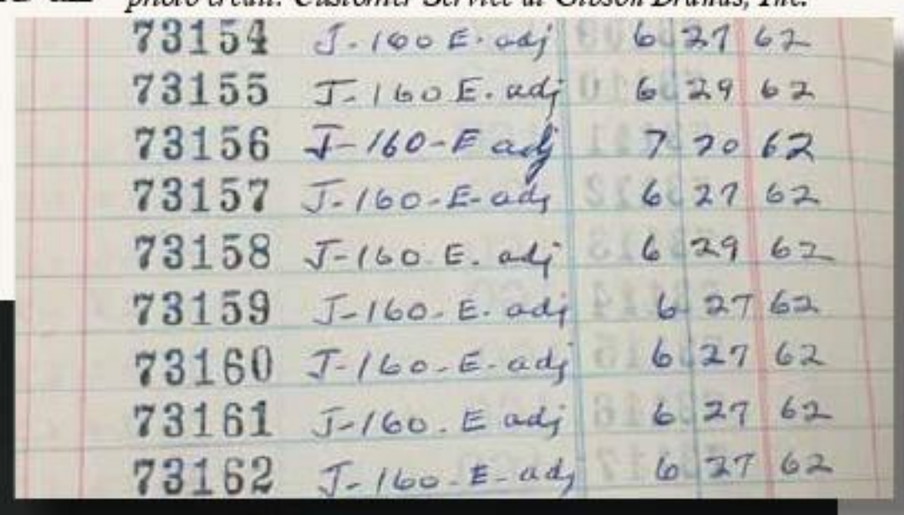
Intravaia offered a somewhat different take on that very special moment.

"We watched that video and realized almost immediately what he had," Intravaia said. "I ran out of that room and started yelling out to my wife that we thought we had John Lennon's guitar. And then I realized that John had 10 minutes left in his lesson, so we finished the lesson and he actually paid me for that hour lesson."

Intravaia added, "I think he's going to get a nice return on that $80 lesson!"

At that point another mutual friend was called upon for assistance, and that was Tom Gulotta of Reelin' in the Years Productions, LLC, a San Diego-based com-

photo credit: Customer Service at Gibson Brands, Inc.



pany that happens to own the world's largest library of music video footage – over 20,000 hours of material from the 1920s to today.

"Basically, after seeing a few pictures of my guitar and comparing it to the video clips we found on YouTube, Tom then went and took some high definition photos of my guitar, including some very nice close-ups of the pickguard," McCaw said. "He then compared those photos to some high definition stills he was able to pull from some video footage showing The Beatles with those guitars from late 1963. When he matched one shot over the other you could see clearly that the two pickguards were identical. We could very easily tell by looking at the white marks and the pattern of the tortoiseshell that it was most definitely the same guitar.

"It was at this point that we absolutely knew what we had," McCaw said.

"This world is full of dreamers, you know I'm not the only one
I pray one day that you will find out all you can become
Just a little faith and hope is all you really need
And somewhere down this Long And Winding Road, you'll be living out your dream..."

- "40 Something Years" (3rd verse) by Glenn Ashworth & T.J. Klay

From there, McCaw became a bit cautious and wanted to remain anonymous, so he asked his friend Intravaia to take the lead and enlist his long list of resources to try and properly authenticate the guitar. After making a few phone calls and talking to some close friends, Intravaia was guided to Babiuk in Rochester, New York. They spoke on the phone, and Intravaia told him the story of the guitar and the evidence they had accumulated. The ever-pessimist Babiuk asked for the high definition pictures of the guitar in order to compare the wood grains on both guitars, and one week later, on Sept. 5, 2014, a now excited Babiuk called Intravaia back. It was then that Babiuk verbally confirmed to Intravaia that the guitar was, in fact, Lennon's long lost J-160E. Intravaia then introduced Babiuk to McCaw via email, and that's when the two started communicating to confirm the authenticity of the guitar and its history.

"Quite honestly it was a very quick evolution from excitement to thinking about safety," McCaw said. "I immediately decided that I needed to get it out of my house, so I rented a locker vault in San Diego, and that's where I put it to keep it safe. I knew we were on a journey, and we wanted to make sure the guitar was going to be there at the end of it."

And what a journey it's been. Over the next eight months, before the world found out about the guitar this past June, many thoughts went through McCaw's head. And while the guitar remained locked up most of the time in that high security vault in San Diego, it's also seen the light of the day quite a few times. McCaw and his wife allowed some musicians and artists from the San Diego area to use the guitar in several recordings, and have also allowed the guitar to be photographed both professionally, and by Julien's Auctions in Beverly Hills, California – the auction house they chose to sell the guitar for them in November.

"I was introduced to Darren Julien [owner of Julien's] very early on, and I

started talking to him about selling it," McCaw said. "He's been very helpful since day one in guiding us down this path."

In addition to the recordings and photos, McCaw was also asked by Intravaia if he could bring the guitar to Intravaia's wife Paula's 4th-grade class at Carmel Del Mar Elementary School in San Diego. The class had just completed an assignment that involved the music of John Lennon, and specifically the song "Imagine." Intravaia wanted to introduce the class to the guitar and play the song on it, along with maybe a few others. McCaw didn't even hesitate with his answer.

photo by Paula Intravaia

"Marc's got a heart the size of a basketball," McCaw said. "When he told me how important it would be to him and his wife to have these kids see and hear this guitar, it was a no-brainer. So we took the guitar to the class, and another friend of ours, T.J. Klay, went with us as well. We showed the kids a video of The Beatles playing that guitar, and then Marc and T.J. played a couple of songs with it, including John's 'Imagine.' The entire class sang along with us, and at the end we had all of the kids come up one at a time and take a picture with the guitar.

"The downside to this whole thing was we had to put it away in a vault for safekeeping," McCaw added. "But being able to get it out and have people record with it, and especially showing it to those kids, those were very special moments."

One of the more incredible aspects of this story is the fact that for eight months the family, friends, and neighbors of John McCaw were able to keep the existence of this very special acoustic guitar a secret from the rest of humanity. In today's world of Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, that's quite an accomplishment, while also a true testament to the tight-knit community of family, friends, and neighbors who respected the guitar, and the wishes of the man who basically cared for it for the better part of 46 years.

Even when the news hit the world's media during the first week of June, and not all reaction to the news was positive, McCaw's long-time circle of friends and family all rallied around him and the guitar, never doubting for one second that the guitar had made the journey it was supposed to make. It didn't matter to anyone the circumstances surrounding the guitar's mysterious disappearance, or how it ended up in a southern California music store. On the contrary, the majority of the people in this close-knit community applauded the fact that it had ended up exactly where it was supposed to be – in the hands of an honorable and caring man who took exceptional care of it for 46 years and guarded it with his life.

"You're not going to get around the negativity surrounding something like this, because people are going to say whatever they're going to say about it," said Darren Julien, owner of Julien's Auctions in Beverly Hill, California. "Personally, I believe people should focus on what this incredible guitar sounds like, what it truly means, and the fact that it was found. Because if John Lennon was alive today I think he'd be very happy that it was found, and that it was so well taken care of for all these years."

Julien also touched on the workings behind the scenes to get the guitar ready for public consumption. He (correctly) anticipated there would be a huge demand for information regarding the guitar's provenance, and he prepared very well for the task at hand.

"We've been working on this for almost one year now," Julien said. "We really did our homework. We researched every angle we could, and had as many top people as we could possibly get to examine it. We took really close-up photos and matched every single little detail we could, including scratch marks. We found the actual receipts from when The Beatles bought these guitars, and basically everything was a perfect match.

"The other thing is John McCaw, himself," Julien added. "This is a true blue collar working-class guy. He's not a professional guitar player, but he loves the guitar. He's just not the kind of guy that would make up a story like this. John is as honest as the day is long. It's really one of those things that's too good to be true. But in this case it *is* true. As much as I'd like to think I'll top this someday, I honestly don't think I'll ever have another discovery like this in my lifetime."

The other obvious criticism – or question and/or point for comment – regards whether McCaw is the rightful owner of the guitar, and if the Lennon estate has any rightful claim to the guitar. As we noted earlier, no one from The Beatles, or anyone else associated with the band, has ever made any type of claim for the instrument. Additionally, a quick check of the statute of limitations for this type of situation in the United Kingdom reveals that the maximum length of time that can pass for anyone to make such a claim is 12 years in some cases, and six years in most. Therefore, even if someone were to come forward and attempt to claim the guitar today, the U.K.'s statute of limitations laws would likely

Delivers Pure Inspiration

—Pro Audio Review

H9
Harmonizer®
Effects Processor

The award-winning H9 delivers Eventide's signature reverbs, delays, chorus and pitch-shifting effects from the acclaimed stompboxes: TimeFactor, Space, ModFactor and PitchFactor.

Learn more at **eventide.com**

Guitar Player EDITORS' PICK
PG PremierGuitar PREMIER GEAR
Guitar World PLATINUM AWARD

Eventide®

Eventide and Harmonizer are registered trademarks of Eventide. ©2015 Eventide Inc.

The Best Thing That Can Happen to Your Playing!

Guitar College

Try out our free videos

Intermediate to advanced jazz, blues & country guitar videos

Over 500 videos on playing solos, standards, fingerstyle, comping & more

Stream or download to your computer
Get tab & notation plus practice tracks
Individual titles or All Access subscriptions
Also available on DVD

NEW - Try our 2-way video coaching

Featuring
Rich Severson

www.guitarcollege.com

LBJ Library Photo by Lauren Gerson

prove quite prohibitive in this case.

Neither Julien, McCaw, nor Babiuk would comment on whether or not they've been contacted by the Lennon estate regarding this guitar, and/or its sale. However, when asked if they could foresee anything standing in the way of the guitar's sale this coming November, their response was quick and to the point.

"No, I don't see anything standing in the way of the auction taking place on Nov. 6," Julien said. "I honestly don't see anything hindering it. There was never any police report filed for this guitar, or anything else like that. John [McCaw] has been the rightful owner of this guitar for so many years now, and frankly I don't see why he would have to give it back. Personally, I think it's really great to see a good guy like John benefit from something like this. This is a great break for a really great man."

Babiuk completely agreed with Julien's assessment.

"All the naysayers and the negative people, they really don't get it. There's a much bigger picture here, and frankly [the naysayers and the negative people] are all missing it," Babiuk said. "People don't understand that there's a lot at stake here. I wouldn't have put my name on this guitar if I didn't feel 100 percent comfortable with it, and obviously there's a very good reason as to why I'm very comfortable with it. I'm not concerned one bit about what people think about it. Personally, I think it's a groovy guitar, and probably the greatest rock and roll find ever."

McCaw's close friend Intravaia echoed the same sentiments

"That guitar could not have ended up in better hands," Intravaia said. "John [McCaw] didn't do anything to the guitar. No modifications, nothing. All he did was simply change the strings on it. That's it. That guitar is basically in the same condition as it was the day he bought it, and pretty much in the same condition as it was in that last video Lennon played it in. If this guitar would have been owned by anyone else they probably would have changed the tuners, and who knows what else. This guitar ended up in the right place at the right time, and in the hands of the guy that it was supposed to end up in. Anything else and I guarantee you we wouldn't be having this conversation."

McCaw and his wife were adamant about sharing the guitar with as many people as possible prior to its sale. To that end they arranged for the guitar to be on display at the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library in Austin, Texas, from June 13-29, 2015. After that, the guitar makes its way to the GRAMMY Museum in Los Angeles for display from July 2 to Sept. 7, 2015, and then on to Julien's Auctions in Beverly Hills for display from Nov. 2-6.

While no one knows for sure how much the guitar will sell for, many are thinking it might break all records for the highest price ever paid for any guitar. Whatever it sells for, though, McCaw and his wife have already arranged for a "large" part of the final sale price to go to a charity called The Spirit Foundation.

"There is definitely a magical aura that surrounds this guitar," Julien said. "Even when you hold it, you feel a sense of its history and importance. Personally, I believe it will break records. It's definitely a museum piece, but I also believe it should be played again because I think the guitar still has some songs left in it. It's hard to describe, really. I honestly can't compare it to anything else."

Babiuk also agreed.

"I have been absolutely blown away by this guitar. It's really freaked me out," Babiuk said. "And I think the thing that makes it even cooler is that [McCaw] had it for all those years and didn't know what he had. There is no agenda here. He's not trying to make a story out of it.

"All I can tell you is that I've played a lot of famous guitars," Babiuk concluded. "I've played guitars owned and played by Keith Richards, Bob Dylan, and many, many others. But this one … this one sent a chill up my spine the second I touched it, and that in itself is pretty amazing."

"And it's all been stitched together
Like a giant patchwork quilt
Piece by piece step-by-step tell the picture stands complete
And I know there's so much more to this
Then the choices that I've made
And that the "Great Someone",
He's been guiding me every step along the way…"

- "40 Something Years" (bridge section) by Glenn Ashworth & T.J. Klay

Gabriel J. Hernandez is the owner of Blues Vintage Guitars, Inc., a shop in Nashville, Tennessee, specializing in the buying and selling of vintage and newer high-end guitars and gear. He is also an accomplished writer, having earned a B.S. in Journalism from The University of Florida in 1988. Over a 25-year career he has worked as an investigative journalist for several news organizations and publishing companies, as a staff sports writer for The Palm Beach Post, and most recently as the Web Editor for Gibson Guitars at the company's worldwide headquarters in Nashville. Hernandez has played guitar since the age of six, and has been fascinated (some say obsessed) by the instrument – and music in general – ever since. You can reach him any time at 1-615-613-1389, or visit his company's web site at www.bluesvintageguitars.com.

MicroBass

The Gold Tone MBass has a small, lightweight body with a big contra tone. Great for children through professional player.

The MBass is available in a 23" & 25" scale length acoustic/electric body as well as a 23" scale length solid body electric.

Microbass.com

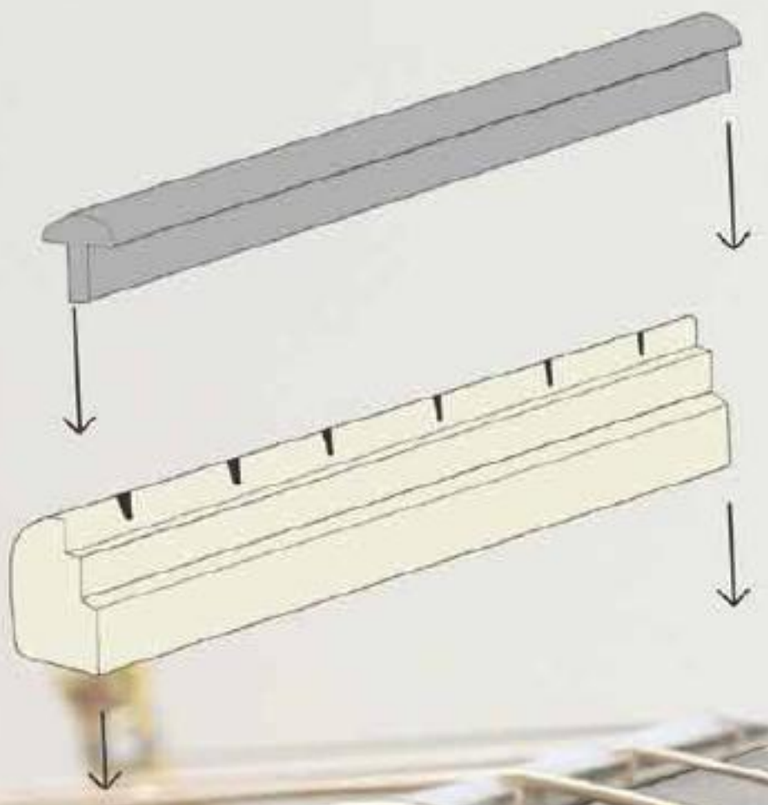
ZERO GLIDE

— Improves Playability —
Lowest possible string action at nut
Open position is like playing with a capo

— Impoves Tuning Stability —
Decreases nut friction by 93%, increasing pitch retention following string bends

— Improves consistency of tone —
Open string tone is the same as fretted notes
Loud and articulate hammer-ons & pull-offs

ZeroGlide is interchangable with a conventional nut on any of your fretted instruments



Installing your ZeroGlide Nut System is as easy as

1 Measure It
2 Fit It
3 Glue It

www.zeroglide.com

X Marks the Spot with Martin's New Ed Sheeran X Signature Model Guitar

by Eric Dahl

Signature models have become a huge draw for much of the music gear buying public, whether it be in guitars, amps, pedals, strings, or other accessories. Sometimes these artist-endorsed models aren't even built with the endorsees involvement and carry few, if any, of their personal requests. Such is not the case with the new Martin Ed Sheeran X Signature Edition. Ed personally collaborated with the fine folks at C.F. Martin & Company to develop this instrument. As most of us know from seeing him on awards shows and hearing his songs on the radio, Sheeran is a Grammy nominated, multiplatinum singer songwriter who has had #1 songs on the US and UK charts.

The original LX1E Martin Ed Sheeran Signature model, which launched in 2013, was based on the "Little Martin" guitar, but had a number of Ed's personal touches and sold out quickly. The latest edition to the Martin family is being called the Ed Sheeran X Signature Edition, and it takes the original concept further.

My friends at Martin allowed me to briefly play one of these "prototypes". Not only was the neck incredibly fast, but it was equally amazing how much sound you could generate from such a small-bodied instrument. I'm also a fan of their built in electronics with tuner and battery indicator in case you need to plug into an amp or PA system for a quick jam. The Koa wood inlayed X (his signature logo) is seamlessly set into the top of the guitar, and it's a real eye catcher.

Sheeran, although world-renowned for his songs and performances, is lesser known for his incredible generosity to charities, especially the East Anglia's Children's Hospices with facilities in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cambridgeshire in the UK. 100% of his royalties from the sales of the guitars will go to these charities.

Features of the guitar include Sheeran's signature X in the headstock and inlayed up the entire fret board. His X (as mentioned earlier) is also inlayed in Koa on the top of the guitar. Other features include a Spruce top, Richlite fret board, Fishman Isys T electronics with a built in tuner, and a gig bag. The neck is laminated birch, and the hand-rubbed aging toner finish on the modified low-oval body shape really gives this guitar a classier, vintage vibe. I can certainly see this Sheeran model being a great song writing guitar, travel guitar, or just an around the house instrument. Ed Sheeran and C.F. Martin have created a high quality tone machine that is portable and fun to play, plus you get that warm fuzzy feeling knowing that some of your investment is going to charity. The MSRP is $699 but you can find them online for $549, which isn't a lot of dough for a Martin or Signature model. Check them out. I think you'll be surprised at the big sound for a little money, and it beats taking your HD28 on a family trip!

Eric Dahl resides in Nashville TN with his wife and daughter. He is the author of "B.B. King's Lucille and the Loves Before Her" and he does a weekly TV gear review show called the FOX 17 Rock and Review.

GUITAR WORLD

BEST of SHOW

2015 NAMM

90TH ANNIVERSARY

REVOLUTION XM

TUNING MACHINES

19:1 RATIO DIECAST 'G' MOUNT

KLUSON®

800-449-9348

SALES@KLUSON.COM

WDMUSIC.COM/KLUSON

Road Gold - 1920s Martin Ukulele

by Michael Elsner

When I was growing up my father used to take us to an auction house every weekend. A common Friday night in our family involved driving an hour and a half down to a town south of Poughkeepsie, NY, and browsing through the pieces that were set to be auctioned the next day. Being a youngster, this definitely wasn't my idea of fun. Most of what I saw each weekend looked like junk, but every so often we'd go back on a Saturday so my father, an avid collector of 1700's and 1800's era clocks, could bid on a few pieces.

Over the years I've occasionally attended local auctions. In part just to relive some of those old memories, and at other times because I saw something worth bidding on. The interesting and fun thing about auctions is that you can always win the bid if you're willing to pay any price to get the item. At the same time, you can get some absolutely incredible deals.
Fortunately, many auction houses these days now post photos on their website of virtually every piece that will be auctioned off at their next event. You gotta love technology! That's how I stumbled upon this 1920s Martin Ukulele. While randomly perusing a local auction house's site, I came across this soprano uke with no particular year of production. In the photo it looked to be in very nice shape, so I was interested in seeing it in person.

Granted, anything vintage with the names Martin or Gibson will instantly grab my attention, and I've seen a number of instruments by these makers go for extraordinary amounts of money over the years. However, there was something about this particular ukulele that grabbed my attention.

When I showed up, I learned that this particular auction was an estate sale, meaning the prior owner had passed away and his family, not wanting to deal with or sell his possessions on their own, put them up for sale via the auction house. Because there were only 2 strings still on it, it was hard to hear the actual sound quality, but physically it was nearly perfect. I took some pictures and went home to do some research. Again, you really have to love modern technology and the information we can discover at literally

the drop of a hat.

It was nearly impossible to put a date on this particular uke because, as is typical of Martin ukuleles of this era, this instrument has no serial number. It was a Martin soprano size style 0 with mahogany neck, top, back, and sides. It had a Brazilian rosewood fingerboard with three small dot inlays, and no logo on the front of the headstock. What's interesting is that Martin stamped their CF Martin logo on the back of the headstock until roughly 1929/1930, which would make this a 1920's model. One other aspect to these particular pieces is how rare it is to find them with the original non-geared metal tuners.

All in all, this particular ukulele was not only well taken care of, but from the condition of the wood, it seems to have been very rarely played. Even the original case was in superb condition.

This was truly one of those moments where I knew I had stumbled upon a great 90+ year-old instrument in exceptional original condition. The only thing I could hope for was that there wouldn't be anyone else at the auction as interested in buying it as I was.

After the bidding got up to over $250, it came down to a short bidding war between myself and one other guy who, after a few back and forth bids, backed out. To say I was thrilled is an understatement. I knew my 'bail out' limit, and fortunately we were still quite a few dollars away from that number when the auctioneer yelled 'sold!'

I brought this instrument home and gave it some love and a solid cleaning. After putting on some new strings I was literally shocked at how well it not only played, but also sounded. They say ukulele is the easiest instrument to learn. I say it's one of the most fun to play. There's a fun innocence about the sound of a ukulele. If you pair it up with a glockenspiel, you have the sonic foundation for so many commercials and background instrumentals for TV/film.

I had never owned a ukulele prior to this one. Ironically, once I had spent a few weeks playing with it, I got a call to write and record a 15-song ukulele record for one of my publishers who needed music for a multitude of upcoming commercials. I also used this extensively on my Steel & Wood: Songwriter Acoustic Sessions loop library released by Big Fish Audio.

I'm constantly adding instruments to my collection, yet I can't even begin to tell you the last time I bought one from a traditional music store. It's easily been 6 or 7 years simply because I love finding vintage instruments through non-traditional routes, whether that be out on the road, via websites such as Craigslist, or in this case, a local auction house. All the information to make these finds is very easily accessible if you just spend 15 or 20 minutes scanning some websites each week. You won't win them all, but the ones you win become special additions to your little instrument family. Happy hunting!

Michael Elsner is a guitarist/songwriter/producer whose written for shows including American Idol, Amish Mafia, EXTRA, The Sing Off, and So You Think You Can Dance among many others.
www.michaelelsner.com

~ COLLECTIBLES ~

LOVE ONE WOMAN... MANY GUITARS

MusiciansThreads.com

The ORIGINAL shirt that took the world by storm... You Live It... Now Wear It! And wear it well.

Starting at $16
www.MusiciansThreads.com

CABLE SAX

Address that cable mess! You know that one you keep tripping on. Use the Cable Sax ORIGINAL or HOODIE to shorten that long cable to any length you want. Also use the hanger loops or handle to hang the cable up and out of the way. Perfact for instrument & computer cables!

starting at $14.99
www.cablesax.com
*cables not included

THE FRETBOARD LESS TRAVELED

by Rich Severson

E String Blues, Blues with a Drone String

Here is a cool little fingerstyle blues piece that uses an open drone string with a walking bass line. The idea is like Paul McCartney's "Blackbird" guitar accompaniment applied to a 12 bar blues progression in the key of E. If you'd like to see a video on the piece, go to 99CentGuitarLessons.com and click on the "FREE LESSON" button to download the video and PDF to your computer.

This chord progression is a little different than the standard 12 bar blues and more similar to a jazz or Dixieland Blues. Having more chords within the progression makes it more interesting by giving us more note choices for the bass line.

Let's compare "E String Blues" progression and a standard 12 bar blues.

Standard Blues in E:

E^7				A^7		
////	////	////	////	////	////	////
E^7		B^7	A^7	E^7	B^7	
////	////	////	////	////	////	////

A Jazzier Sounding Blues:

E^7	A^7	E^7		A^7		
////	////	////	////	////	////	////
E^7	E^7 $E^{\flat 7}$ D^7 $C^{\#7}$		$F^{\#7}$	B^7	E^7 $C^{\#7}$	$F^{\#7}$ B^7
////	/ / / /	////	////	////	////	////

In the music to the left, on bars 11 & 12, some chords are surrounded in parentheses ( ) indicating passing chords. A common right hand picking technique would be to play the drone string (1st string) with the ring finger. Notes found on the 6th & 3rd string are played with the thumb and index fingers, and notes found on the 5th & 2nd string are played with the thumb and middle fingers. Get it up to speed and you've got a nice little blues piece with some new chord changes. Enjoy!

See you next issue,
Rich

Rich Severson is a guitarist, clinician, author, and former GIT instructor.
To preview Rich's music and guitar educational products go to

www.GuitarCollege.com and www.99CentGuitarLessons.com

CONSIGN WITH US!

See why we are the best choice for historical Rock "n" Roll artifacts!

Michael Jackson's jacket worn in *Thriller* video
sold for $1.8 Million

Julien's AUCTIONS

THE AUCTION HOUSE TO THE STARS

For more information please call (310) 836-1818 or email info@juliensauctions.com

9665 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 150 | Beverly Hills, CA 90210 | www.juliensauctions.com

SO YOU WANT TO BE A MUSICIAN

by Michael Elsner

Q&A (Part 1)

Players seeking advice on pursuing a career as a musician often ask me the same 3 or 4 questions. So, in no particular order, here are some of those most commonly asked questions and my personal perspective.

Do you think it's vital to live in a music city like Los Angeles, New York, or Nashville?

Since most people who ask me this are players, my answer is, "Yes," although it really depends on what you want to do and what you're pursuing. If you have your own band, or are your own artist, then you have more freedom to stay local to your hometown. You can generate industry interest by developing a local fan base and then extending outward from there. However if you're a player and are looking to work with touring acts and major artists, then it's ideal that you relocate to a music industry city. There's really no other way to break in and make the connections necessary other than becoming a part of those music communities.

What are the best ways to connect with players in the local music scene so people know who I am?

This is the one question that I get asked the most. This is where 'networking' really comes in to play. It's imperative that before you start networking and reaching out to people, you determine exactly what your goals are. Your goals will dictate the path you take.

For example, if you want to be playing out on the road, the people who you'll want to network with are the touring musicians behind A-list artists. If you want to be a session player, you'll want to network with not only established session players, but producers, engineers, and songwriters as well.

Networking is an art unto itself; however, you can start by going to clubs, getting introductions from other musicians, or just directly e-mailing players you respect. There really is no one way to network other than just getting out and putting yourself in situations where you can meet, interact, and ideally, play with other musicians.

Recently I met a young drummer who asked me this exact question. I asked him who he would ideally want to connect with. He mentioned a first call session drummer, and I told him to send him an e-mail. He couldn't believe it was that simple. The next morning I received a text from him, ecstatic that this session drummer had returned his e-mail and agreed to meet up with him. It can be that easy.

In a major music market, how do I stand out amongst the sea of players who have more facility on their instrument than I do?

Realize first and foremost that everyone, regardless of their level of physical proficiency, brings something new and unique to the table. You are you. Don't compare yourself to others.

When I was a younger player, just starting in this business, I learned that it was more important to play on my strengths and work on what I was good at vs. spending time on things that I'm not. I'm not a jazz or flamenco player and I never will be. I spend my time working on my rhythm chops and lead playing as well as on my fingerstyle acoustic playing. I'm good in the studio, but my passion lies in touring and traveling. I'm a pop/rock guitarist. That's what I love, that's what I study, and that's what I'm good at. If you need that, call me. If you need something else, I have a rolodex of players you can call. Ultimately, you'll stand out when you have a solid perspective of who you are as a player.

So much of this industry is based completely around who you know and your network of friends. You'll get the majority of your work from people who already know your strengths and goals as a player.

If you want to be a touring musician, then oftentimes your hairstyle, clothing, stage presence, and personality will be the determining factors of you getting the gig. Your ability to be creative and improvise/create parts on the fly aren't as important as your image and stage persona.

If you want to be a session player, wearing the latest fashion isn't a top priority. What matters is your ability to create parts, follow charts, be creative in a studio setting, work under pressure, and be part of a collaborative unit, as well as your collection of guitars, amps, and pedals.

Ultimately, the best piece of advice I can give you is to know what you bring to the table, and be confident in it.

I just got an artist gig, any advice?

This is where you can quickly build your reputation, or tear it down. The phrase "practice at home, rehearse with the band," has a lot of relevance in this situation. It simply means to learn your parts and come prepared. When you have a scheduled rehearsal with the artist, you should come in knowing all your parts, all the arrangements, all the lyrics and background harmonies, and have your tones ready to go.

You'd think this is common sense, but you'd be surprised how often I hear stories of guys who get a gig, and then show up unprepared, only to lose it within a matter of days or weeks. If you want to build your reputation quickly, arrive fully prepared. People want to know you can be counted on when they hire you.

I have a good friend who always uses the phrase, "If you're not early, you're late." This is definitely a phrase to live by.

Realize also that unexpected things WILL happen out on the road. They could range from a bus breaking down in the middle of the desert, to getting sick with the flu, flight delays, lost luggage or gear . . . the list is literally endless. If you're going to be the one who complains and throws a fit when things don't work out your way, then it's going to be a short ride. You have to be a team player who can roll with the punches.

Developing a reputation as someone who's easy to get along with, and who others enjoy being around for long lengths of time will get you the gig over a phenomenal player with a bad attitude.

The music industry is a gauntlet full of obstacles to overcome, but it's extremely fulfilling to make a living doing what you love. To succeed, you have to set a goal, create a plan of action, and then follow that plan to attain your desired outcome. This is a crazy industry, but I know first hand it can be done, and I see it all the time with other players - some of whom have been in the game for years, and others who've been in the game for literally months. There is no time frame for when success can find you, but I assure you, if you play the game, and stay in the game, it will. ◇

READY TO UPGRADE?
peterson
Strobo Clip
HD TUNING
OVER 65 YEARS OF STROBE TUNING TECHNOLOGY PACKED INTO A CLIP-ON TUNER PLACES THE STROBOCLIP IN ITS OWN CLASS.
WE INVITE YOU TO FIND OUT WHY.
• 1/1000TH OF A FRET ACCURATE TUNING
• 28 SWEETENED TUNING™ PRESETS
• CARBON FIBER CLIP DESIGN
• STAINLESS STEEL HOUSING
• SUSTAIN MODE OPERATION
• BUZZ FEITEN SUPPORT
/petersontuners
The Sound of Precision peterson STROBE TUNERS
www.PetersonTuners.com | USA | 708.388.3311
©2015 Peterson Tuners. The terms Sweetened Tuning and StroboClip are trademarks of Peterson Electro-Musical Products, Inc.
Buzz Feiten Tuning System is a registered trademark of Buzz Feiten Design Co., Inc.

"All About Amps" cont. from page 17

heavy amp, fantastic deals are available on large amps like classic seventies-era Twin Reverbs, Super Reverbs, Traynors, and Ampegs. Leo Fender may well be up in Heaven scratching his head over this, but the big "professional" amps are going for about half what the smaller amps like the Princetons and Deluxes. It is true that big amps are likely to be too clean-sounding for many at-home blues or rock players, but if you want to play "The Thrill Is Gone" (Rest in peace, B.B. King), a Twin or Pro Reverb will fill the bill.

Another way to save some money is to buy a head instead of a combo amp, especially if you own a speaker cabinet of some kind or at least know of a good deal on one. If you already own a modern combo amp, don't forget that by merely disconnecting the internal amp it will make a fine speaker cabinet for an older head. I love Fender Bassman heads, and even blackface models show up in our price range. Other heads to consider would be Ampegs, Traynors, and Fenders like the Bandmaster Reverb or Showman Reverb. Another favorite is the Silvertone Twin Twelve; great bluesy tone and still very affordable. I should also mention that some adventurous people really love the vintage public-address amps that I convert for guitar use.

As far as combo amps, if you want the best value you will have to stay away from Fenders and many older Gibsons. The seventies-era Champ is about the only Fender I commonly see in the $300-500 range. Also in our price bracket would be Ampegs like the Reverberocket and Gemini, Gibson and Epiphone amps like the Falcon and Pathfinder, and a whole slew of "budget" brands like Silvertone, Airline, Valco, and Univox, One favorite of mine is the Silvertone 1482, but almost any American-made combo using one or two 6V6 power tubes has potential. Most of these amps won't have the build-quality of a Fender, especially in the cabinet design, but since the circuits are still point-to-point wired, they are very serviceable. And speaking of service, an experienced and sympathetic repair person is a great asset to anyone who wants to start fooling around with vintage amps. An amp that isn't working correctly won't last as long or sound as good as it should.

Skip Simmons is a nationally known vintage amp repairman.

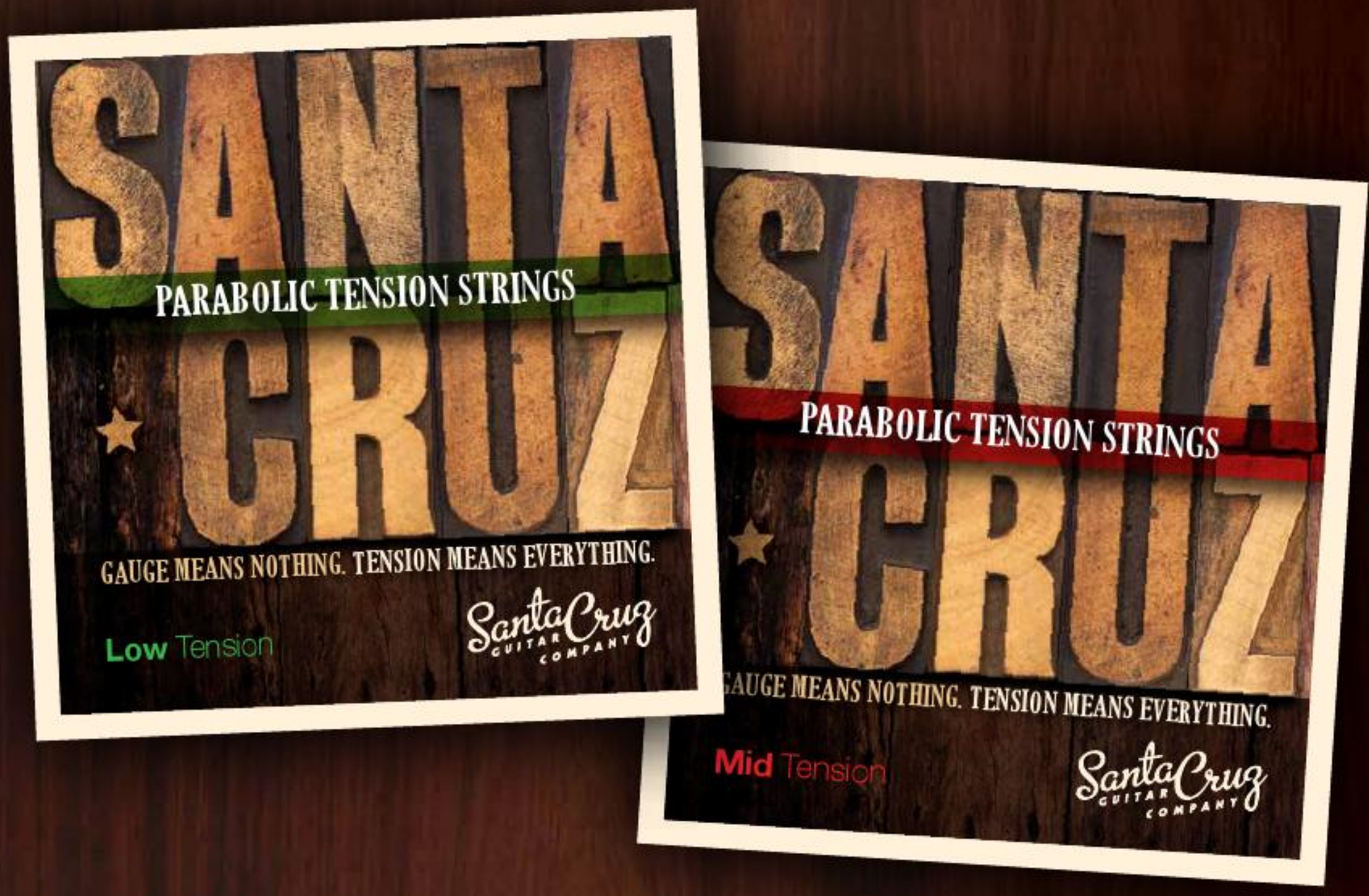
He can be reached at SkipSimmonsAmps.com

SUBSCRIBE NOW
COLLECTIBLE GUITAR MAGAZINE'S PASSION IS ALL THINGS GUITAR - VINTAGE TO NEW, THEN AND NOW.
COLLECTIBLE GUITAR
then and now
Imagine Finding John Lennon's Long Lost Gibson J-160E
Last year, someone did... then realized he'd had it for 46 years!
REVIEWS
DOWNLOAD OUR FREE APP!
Available on the App Store
ANDROID APP ON Google play
Only $19.95 per year
$29.95 in Canada
collectibleguitar.com

©2016 SANTA CRUZ GUITAR COMPANY

FOR 40 YEARS, SANTA CRUZ GUITAR COMPANY
HAS RAISED THE STANDARDS OF MODERN LUTHERIE.

IMAGINE WHAT WE WILL DO WITH STRINGS.



GAUGE MEANS NOTHING. TENSION MEANS EVERYTHING.

Santa Cruz GUITAR COMPANY

EXCLUSIVELY AT SANTACRUZGUITAR.COM

PEDAL SNAPSHOT

by Phil Traina

Tonehunter Blue Line Overdrive $379EU

In a sea of D-Style pedals that seem to be popping up every day, it is rare that one stands out from the crowd. The Tonehunter Blue line overdrive out of Germany does! I have had quite a few D-style pedals across my desk over the past few years, but the Blue Line is something different. With over four years of development with two Dumble rigs to test with, Tonehunter did something very cool. It's not going for the overly saturated, ultra mid heavy, honky overdrive tones that have been known to be associated with D-Style tones. The Blue Line nails the nuances and the subtleties that make D-style amps so great: dynamics, dynamics, dynamics… touch sensitivity, note flipping, controlled feedback . . .the Blue Line truly sounds like an amp.

The layout is very simple: volume controls the overall output, voice controls the timbre of the pedal, from smooth and fat to screaming highs, while overdrive controls the amount of gain. Plus, there are two switches: Jazz/Rock. The jazz setting has a nice roll off the top. It's very usable. Switching to the Rock setting gets you a wide open tone. The Bright/Deep switch does just that; it adds or subtracts bass.

If you are wading into the Dumble pool and wondering what to try, the Blue Line is great.

www.tonehunter.de/index-en.php

Xotic Wah XW-1 Street $236

The wah pedal has remained largely unchanged since its incarnation in the 60's. Xotic Effects has created a wah that not only sounds great, but is also very versatile. Let's start with the obvious size difference...the Xotic wah is approximately 20% smaller than your average wah. At first I thought this would be an issue, but the only issue it created was more space on my pedal board. I became used to the smaller footprint very quickly. The sound is based sonically on the Clyde McCoy wah, but has many tone shaping options. On the outside of the wah there are bias, wah-q, bass, and treble controls. When you pop own the bottom plate you see four DIP switches that modify toe-down range, input gain, presence cut, and wah-Q frequency.

The XW-1 is built with high quality components and keeps the tweak-happy guitar player in mind with all the adjustment capability, as well as keeping it simple for the non knob turners in the group. Setting all the controls at noon it's basically a straight up Clyde McCoy, then Terel away to your hearts delight.

This may be the largest stride the wah pedal has ever had. It is a joy to play.

http://main.xotic.us

65amps Colour Bender $295
and **Colour Face** $275

65amps is known for building some of the coolest boutique amp rigs out there. Now they have entered the world of pedals. They have two new offerings: the Colour Bender, and Colour Face. The Colour Bender is a fresh take on the MkII tonebender. This triple germanium based Fuzz has a couple cool features. The voice switch tightens up the fuzz a bit, going from the original voicing to the modified voicing. The Low and High switch takes some of the gain out to add a bit more clarity. Along with the main controls level and attack, you have a bunch of tweakable, tonebender sounds. The Colour Bender is a blast to play.

The Colour Face is another germainium transistor based on the Arbiter Fuzz Face. This classic tone, made famous by Jimi Hendrix, helped take 60's and 70's psychedelic guitar to the forefront of a generation's music. The Colour Face has everything you would ever expect from a vintage fuzz face, with a solid build and quiet operation. The stock and mod switch takes a bit of the woofiness and gain out and gives a great new flavor.

Both of 65amps germainium Fuzzes are great additions for anyone looking for a versatile fuzz, or for the player who wants to try something just a little bit different.

http://boutiqueampsdistribution.com

Wampler Plexi Drive Deluxe
Street $239.97

Brian Wampler's newest Marshall style pedal is an advanced take on his original Plexi drive. The Plexi drive deluxe has quite a few different tonal options. The controls of the Plexi Drive Deluxe are fairly straightforward. It has the standard EQ for Bass, Middle, and Treble. The post gain knob controls the overall Plexi amp style gain. The level controls the overall volume. The two switches, bass boost and bright boost, function just as described. The newest feature that differentiates it from the original Plexi drive is the pre-gain. It acts like you are hitting the front of the amp with a TS style overdrive. If you are looking for a convincing Plexi style drive pedal with a little something extra, the Plexi Drive Deluxe is a winner.

www.wamplerpedals.com

Big Joe Stompbox Company
Empire Overdrive Street $319.95

The Empire was designed with Nashville guitarist Paul Allen. He had quite a few ideas of what a gigging guitar player would want in a pedal. In essence the Empire is three pedals in one. The B side is a low to medium gain style drive. The A side is a more saturated lead style drive. But not to be outdone by other two sided drive pedals it has an adjustable buffer which works independent of the pedal being engaged or not. Also, the buffer can act as an additional gain stage when cranked.

Lets start with side B, the low-gain side. The controls on this side are slightly simpler. Gain controls the drive, output controls the overall volume of that side, tone dials in the amount of bass or treble you would like. and the firm/sponge switch allows you to tighten the tone up if you have a loose amp with a flubbier low end. This side, to me, was more of a TS (Tubescreamer) style of drive with the mid hump, but it has more versatility than your typical TS style drive.

The A side reminds me more of a 'Marshall meets Rectifier' style of tone, especially in the higher gain settings. The controls on the A side are: Presence, which response very much like a presence on an amp, pushing it forward in your tonal mix; Drive, which controls the gain; Output, which is the overall volume; Body, which adds or subtracts low end; and Attack, which accentuates pick attack.

The attack knob stands out as something interesting to me. In a live situation, where you may be using an amp from a backline company, you never know what you are getting. If the amp is tired, whether from old tubes or a worn out speaker, the attack knob can compensate. This side also has the firm/sponge switch. Let's also not forget the switch that lets you change which order the sides are in.

Overall the Empire is a very versatile multifunctional pedal. It covers a ton of ground. If you are looking for a pedal that can pretty much cover it all, check out the Empire.

www.bigjoestompboxcompany.com

Phil Traina, The Gear Concierge
Helping guitar players get the tone they've been looking for. Living the dream in Northern California with his wife and kids.

WHICH pedaltrain ARE YOU?

SHOW US ON TWITTER + INSTAGRAM

#mypedaltrain

pedaltrain®

@PEDALTRAIN | PEDALTRAIN.COM

USER PHOTO CREDITS :

left to right / top to bottom

@caseymoore_ @Spivakovski @filipedelbel @matthewhoopes @je_sj77
@iamgabrielvalenz @mccartney007 @reallybenwalker @joshhunt_

Branching Roots
Petros Guitars

by Paul Clark

Bruce & Matt Petros

It's common to hear guitar enthusiasts spout words like, "pre-war, pre-CBS, herringbone, humbucker, single coil, burst", and so forth. Conversely, their conversation is unlikely to include, "stamen, pistil, pollen, cotelydons, hypocotol, epicotyl" ... all vital organisms for developing seed to grow a tree, that after milling, becomes a guitar.

I find it fascinating, and relevant to this article that in the final embryonic stage, the organism has everything it needs to become a tree, but it must remain dormant, patiently waiting for the right conditions for germination.

Like most kids in the late 60's and early 70's, Bruce Petros was an impatient dormant living organism. At age 19, cognizant that his collegiate path had hit a low, he headed high into the Colorado Rockies to work at a dude ranch. Some might say fate, but Bruce will readily testify that he received his calling that summer when he collided with a $15.00, DIY guitar kit.

Just as photosynthesis transforms light, carbon dioxide, and moisture into fuel to grow a tree, the metamorphosis to becoming a master luthier was birthed.

His tender shoot years were fertilized with learning the time tested truths from experienced builders. But perhaps the most unpredictable instruction he received in that season was working as an assistant to a maker of tracker action pipe organs. While his peers were transfixed with feedback from a Marshall amp, Bruce was gaining wisdom about temperament, scales, and tone production, and with it, his instruments began to mature.

Fast forward to 2003. En route to my summer vacation in Door County, Wisconsin, I stopped to sing at a church in Appleton. In between services, and restless to catch the Northport Ferry to Washington Island, the pastor said, "There's a guy in our fellowship who wants to meet you and show you his work. He's not here because he's coming back from Chicago after attending the Simon & Garfunkel Concert last night. Paul purchased one of his guitars."

"*The* Paul Simon?" I asked. Over the years, I've employed many a surface smile to kindly deflect free homemade guitar offers from ardent fans. Interest piqued, I agreed to make a visit.

Entering their home, I was embraced by Bruce, wife Katie, son Matt, his fiance, Laura, and the shop foreman, junk yard dog, Eddie. Instantly surrounded with the sense of being a longtime member of their family, they articulated that, while penniless in 1978, their first date was spent attending a free Paul Clark concert in Oshkosh.

Standing in the shop at their country home, I held a Grand Concert model against my chest and the first strum let me know that it was not the blind result of half concocted guesswork. Like a Magnolia in the Spring, the attention to the minutest of details, be it sonic, or cosmetic, was in full array. Being a collector, and player of vintage Martin and Gibson's, as well as touring for a decade with my Collings OM-3SB, (now in the hands of Chris Tomlin), I was fearful of falling in love again with new!

Hurdling over my obsession with "all things vintage," we designed our first model, "Crown of Thorns." We chose an Adirondack top to partner with the Cocobolo sides and back. Boxwood was the accent wood of choice for the tuners, as well as for the fingerboard binding, aba-

continued on page 54

Make a Joyful Noise

Keeley Engineering

WWW.RKFX.COM - 1-866-8GO-RKFX

4 REQUIREMENTS FOR A GREAT LEAD PLAYER

by Tom Jackson

You play lead… lead guitar, lead saxophone, lead mandolin… whatever instrument it is, you play most of the solos in the band.

You're not the main focal point throughout the performance (like the lead singer), but when it comes time for a solo, you're the main dude!

Being a musician, you know that solos are a combination of melody, tones, phrasing, and delivery. But there is another important visual aspect to being a great lead player/soloist — and that's placement onstage.

There's a Visual Aspect to What You Do

You see, your solos don't sound the same, so they certainly shouldn't look the same, or be delivered from the same place onstage!

A lot of lead guitarists, for instance, are tied to their pedal board. Therefore, the pedal board is in control.

I know going into work with a group I've never worked with, I'll often have a battle with the guitarist about where to deliver a solo from, because he's sure every tone he's chosen is crucial to how well the solo goes over. And it is… in the studio! Live, there can be some compromises. We have to look at each solo and decide if standing behind the pedal board to hit a switch halfway through the solo is more important than the placement and visual delivery onstage.

You need to look at it from the audience's perspective — and 55% of communication is what the audience sees. So if each solo is done from the same place onstage, then each solo will start sounding the same to the audience — I don't care what tonal changes you make.

Remember, audiences are ignorant; and most people don't know you're changing tones. In a club or big concert hall, a lot of those subtle changes get lost anyway. Some tonal changes, extra delay, etc. are only perceived by the guitarist. Even some of the players in the band don't notice the change! For solos like that, placement onstage and visual delivery wins.

For songs where the tone is unique and crucial to the solo (e.g., a wah-wah), then the tone becomes more important than the placement onstage. But even with that said, you could get creative and allow both tone and placement to win. For instance, someone else in the band might be able to hit the pedal you need while you're out front and across the stage.

There's also the visual of how you deliver the solo… but that's for another blog.

For now, I'd like all of you lead players to know the 4 things that are required to do a great job with your band:

1. You need to be able to solo. You need to understand phrasing, tones, melody, tension, payoffs.

2. It's important for you to develop confidence and charisma onstage. Ultimately, you need to become so confident and in control of your body, that you develop your own style and find your own voice visually.

3. Directing the audience's attention wherever and whenever necessary is a BIG part of your job. Know when it's time to take the spotlight, and know how to give the spotlight back or hand it off to others at the appropriate time!

4. Understanding that you are part of a team is crucial. (No one likes a show-stealer.) But when it is your time to be the focus, you need to be able to shine.

These things may require that you look at what you do in a new way. It will likely mean woodshedding and practice as you develop your own style. But the payoff will be huge!

Tom Jackson is a Live Music Producer & master of creating moments onstage. Author of the book "Tom Jackson's Live Music Method," he helps artists at every level create a live show that is engaging and memorable, exceeding audiences' expectations, creating fans for life. Tom has taught 100's of artists of every genre and worked with major artists like Taylor Swift, The Band Perry, Jars of Clay, & more, on their live shows. He also shares his expertise as a highly demanded speaker at colleges, conferences & events worldwide.

Website www.onstagesuccess.com

Works of Art Deserve the Best

Musical instruments are an extension of our soul and deserve quality care. For over 28 years, the original String Swing® has satisfied millions of music enthusiasts around the world. Its low-profile design is attractive and cradles your instrument comfortably and securely.

Each instrument is unique. The experts and craftsmen at String Swing® have created displays for almost every one. Ask your local retailer for an authentic String Swing® hanger, or shop online at www.stringswing.com.

String SWING®

Musical Instrument Displays

WWW.STRINGSWING.COM 888.455.6628 PROUDLY MADE IN THE USA

DPA Microphones d:vote 4099G Instrument Microphone, Super Cardioid, Guitar

by Jack Mao

I've had my Gibson L48 Archtop for a few years now (not sure of the year – probably mid 1950's). It's a spectacularly good playing guitar but ultimately it's an acoustic instrument. I have always wondered what it would sound like "electric" but it's all original and I would not want to drill holes or modify the guitar. Actually, if I was not so set on keeping the guitar "all original," a few other companies do make an Archtop Bridge Pickup (a Piezo design) but they require professional installation and thus, to a lesser extent, modifying the guitar. The other option is to simply mic the instrument either by conventional methods or by using a "clip on" solution. In this case, DPA Microphones d:vote 4099G Instrument Microphone.

The DPA "d:vote" system is designed around an extremely high quality super-cardioid miniature microphone – their model4099 mic with an extensive range of clips and adaptors designed to allow you to be able to mount the 4099 on just about any acoustic or orchestral instrument. The construction of the microphone is high precision and the shock mount consists of two tiny pieces of rubber. The shock mounts seemed a little fragile so I handled them carefully.

Let me point out before we go any further that this is a professional product, and for it to work correctly, it should be used in a "professional" context. That is to say, the rest of the signal path, a correct acoustic environment and preferably a qualified audio engineer will help you get the most out of this product. All of those elements being present, this is one great microphone for both professional recording and live applications. DPA recommends this microphone for coffee house gigs & jam sessions as well.

The "d:vote 4099G" (G for acoustic guitar) is a super-cardioid condenser microphone and thus requires a 48 volt power supply. There is a removable belt clip on the XLR barrel that allows you to plug it into any rack mount or portable mic preamp. I tested the microphone into an ART TPS II Preamp into ProTools 9. The microphone itself clips onto the body of the guitar with the included guitar mount. Note the mount must be securely attached to the instrument or it will fall off.

The d:vote 4099G is a high quality super-cardioid microphone, so it is very directional. Thus, where it is mounted and focused (between the sound hole and the 12th fret) on an acoustic guitar is quite important. That said, I was able to locate a sweet spot with the microphone centered over the F hole after a little trial and error. With the adjustable gooseneck you can experiment with various angles.

To use the "d:vote 4099G" in a live situation, you will definitely want a DI with notch filter and adjustable gain stage. As mentioned before, you will need a 48 volt phantom power supply, either on the DI, guitar amp or mixer. For the best results with this particular product, I recommend working with a qualified sound engineer and having a clean signal path. If you have all of that and the right acoustic environment, the d:vote 4099 is a great choice (DPA's end users must agree, as they are routinely used on stages and in studios worldwide)

So, to sum it up, is the DPA d:vote 4099G the right microphone to give a "voice" to my vintage archtop guitar? In my case for my home studio, it might be overkill. This pro piece of gear is listed at $619.95. On the other hand, as I have said a few times in this review… with the right signal path and acoustic environment, it's a great choice for stage or studio! (Kit includes microphone, cable, XLR adapter and instrument clip)

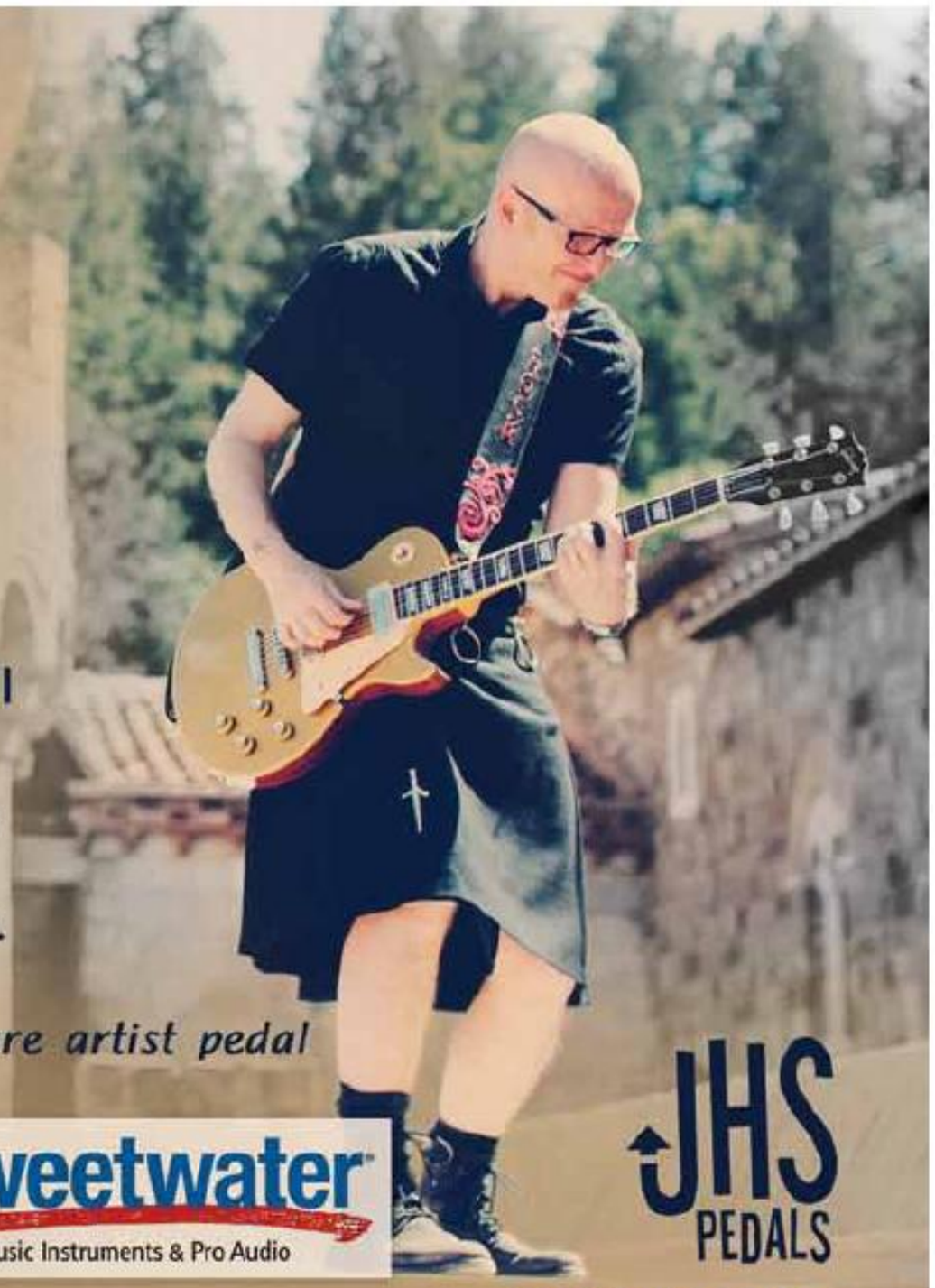
For more information:
www.dpamicrophones.com/en/products.aspx?c=Catalog&category=118

or call (303) 485-1025.

The KILT

A true 2-in-1 Dirt Box / Boost in a small footprint that packs all the power, range, options, and tones you could ever want.

a STU G signature artist pedal



Exclusively at Sweetwater Music Instruments & Pro Audio

JHS PEDALS

instagram.com/jhspedals twitter.com/jhspedals facebook.com/jhspedals

JHSPEDALS.COM

Lakota Leathers

Genuine Bison Leather Straps from the Lakota Sioux Nation

Softer. Stronger. Better.

LAKOTA LEATHERS

www.lakotaleathers.com

VIEW OF THE DAY

by Dave Cleveland

Kelly Black, Session Guitarist

Today I have the privilege to interview one of my favorite guitar players in Nashville, Kelly Back. Kelly and I have worked together since 1990. He is not only a fellow musician, but also a friend. Kelly got his start in Nashville playing for the Hinsons. From there he has played for The Oak Ridge Boys, Randy Travis, Russ Taff, Paul Simon, Wayne Newton, The Bill Gaither Homecoming series, and many, many more. He has played on over 25,000 songs!

Introducing you to some of the unsung heroes of Nashville is one of my favorite things about writing for Collectible Guitar. I hope you enjoy!

Dave Cleveland: How long have you been in Nashville, playing sessions?

Kelly Back: I started doing sessions in Nashville in 1987. Just a few custom album projects here and there.

DC: What were some of the key moments that helped you establish yourself as a player here?

KB: I think in the Gospel world, playing for the Hinsons really put my name on the map. They were known for having a great band, and everyone had a lot of respect for them. A key moment I think was when Michael English called me in to overdub on a Gaither Vocal Band project. The song was "Temporary Home". I remember I had one red Fender Stratocaster at the time, and the song had an 8 bar guitar solo in it that really needed to be a Telecaster thing. I went for it though with the bridge pick up, my Dyna Comp, and some Slapback delay. I think that was a real turning point for my career in the gospel realm.

DC: What kind of gear were you using in the early 90's, and how has that changed over the years?

KB: I loved the 90's sounds! They let us run stereo back then... Lol, the rack days... Oh yeah! I used a Korg A-3, a Quadra Verb, Mxr Dyna Comp, Boogie Studio pre, Furman PQ3 preamp, and some Eventide stuff (loved the chorus). Back then I had it all running through a mixer, and went direct a lot. I also had a Rivera SP1 amp with 2 Rivera 12" closed-back cabs.

For me, over the last 12 years or so, my gear has changed into a more amp and pedal board rig. There are so many great amps out there! Some of my favorites are my Carr Rambler, Tyler JT 46, and my 1996 Matchless Clubman. In the past year I have also been using the Kemper Profiling Amp. They really do sound amazing! I'm also loving some of the stomp boxes out there. The Eventide H9 is one of my favorites.

DC: Do you still have any guitars from your early days?

KB: I still have my red Strat from the mid 80's . The 2 guitars I wish I still had were the custom Les Paul my mom bought me in 1977 and the 1980 Lake Placid blue "the Strat". The 2 I let get away!

I do still have my main Tele that I have had since the mid 90's. It's a MIM (Made in Mexico) black Tele with Seymour Duncan Alnico II Pro pickups and upgraded tuners. I've played a lot of Tele's over the years, from old Fenders to the newer boutique ones, and I always wind up back with my old black Tele. She's been a good one! Guess I'll have to keep her around!

DC: In your opinion, what did it take to become a session player?

KB: I have always loved the creative side of music. Creating hooks and parts in the songs that become just as important as the lyrics. Can you imagine "Sweet home Alabama" without the intro riff? Or the Beatles "Day Tripper" without the guitar part in the intro? Me either... lol

Having a great ear is so important, but just as important is being able to use the tools of the trade. One of the most important is the Nashville number system. I remember sitting and listening to the radio while I charted every song that came on. Then I would go back and try and play the songs just from the charts. Some were not even close, lol, but I kept at it until I could write and read a chart in my sleep.

It is so important also to stay on the cutting edge of the biz. Keeping up with the latest sounds and gear is huge!

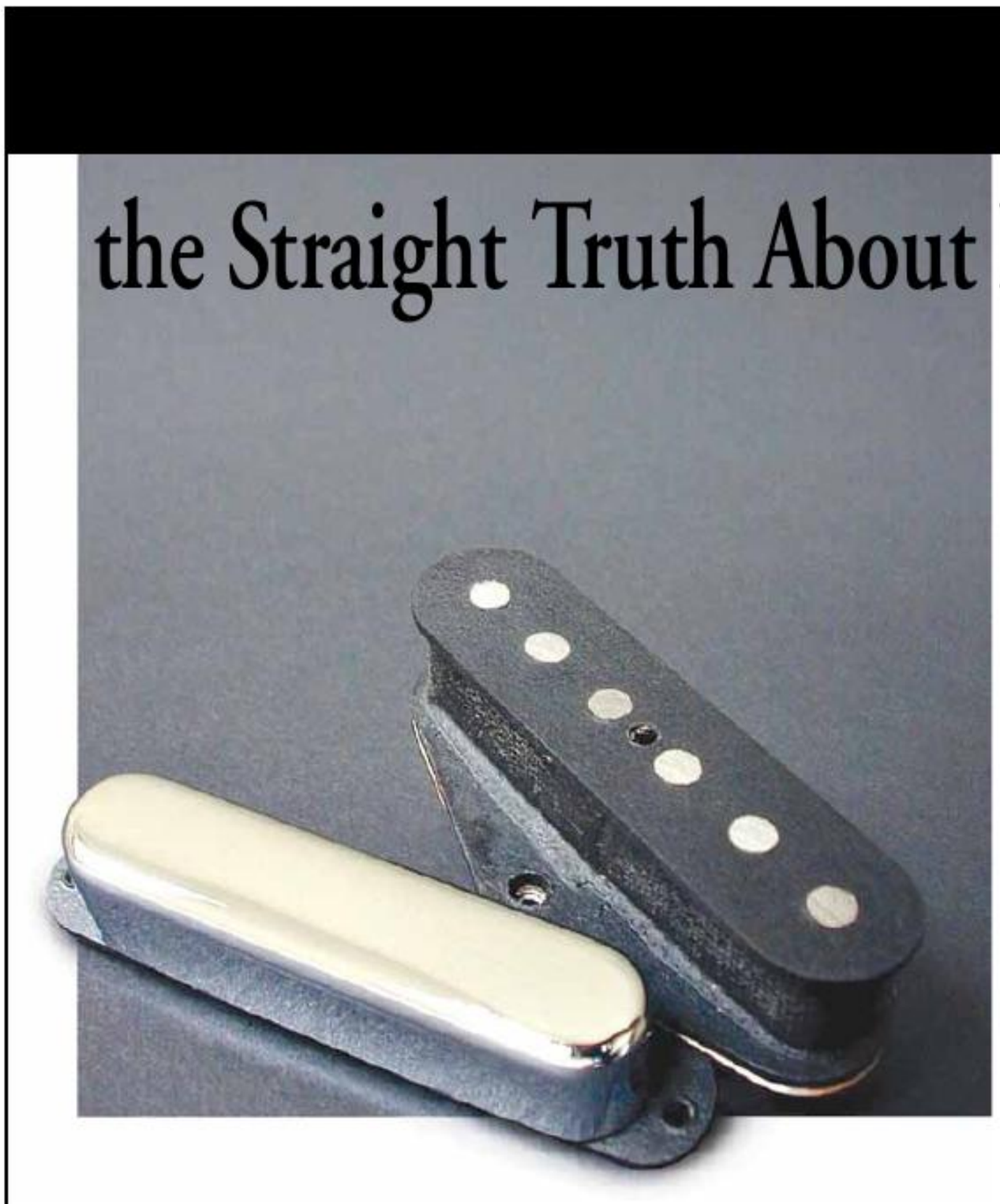
DC: Would you give us some insight on how to create a hook for a song?

KB: Sometimes songs have great melodies that I can pull from to create an intro

continued on page 54

Have a guitar that you love? Display it right!
The Original Z Stand
Holds acoustic or electric guitars.
Handcrafted in the USA.
Stable and strong, they feature the String Swing cradle, the finest available.
Available in Cherry (shown), Mahogany, Maple, Pecan and Walnut.
$149.95 free shipping
Rather buy from a trusted local dealer? Call or email us
1-979-820-7010
zitherusa@yahoo.com
Zither
Music Company
zitherusa.com
NAMM U
BEST
SHOW
NAMM

EarthQuaker Devices
Hand Made in Akron, Ohio Since 2005
9V
Tentacle
EarthQuakerDevices
Analog Octave Up
9V
Voice
M F I N S
Volume
Tone
Gain
Normal | Bright
Bandwidth
Dunes
EarthQuakerDevices
Mini-Ultimate Overdrive
www.earthquakerdevices.com


LOLLAR PICKUPS™
the Straight Truth About Pickups by Jason Lollar
The "magic" found in some (but not all) classic vintage pickups was created by accident. Don't let anyone tell you different. And over time, some pretty stellar accidents happened. The only way to recreate that magic is to study more than a few exceptional examples of all the classic pickup types, while acquiring a thorough understanding of exactly what materials were used and precisely how each pickup was constructed and wound. Only then is the "magic" repeatable, if you are willing to spend the time and money required to chase the dragon. I am.
I personally design and wind over 30 different pickup models, including all the vintage classics, many obscure works of art known only to lap and pedal steel players like Robert Randolph, and even a few of my own designs that never existed in the past.
I invite you to visit our website for sound clips, videos and current product information, or feel free to give us a call.
Lollar Pickups, Tacoma, WA. (206) 463-9838 www.lollarguitars.com

YOU MAY NOT HAVE WRITTEN A CLASSIC, BUT YOU CAN OWN ONE.

BLUES
Vintage Guitars & More
BUY • SELL • TRADE • CONSIGN
2603 Elm Hill Pike Suite J
Nashville, TN 37214
1.888.407.2717

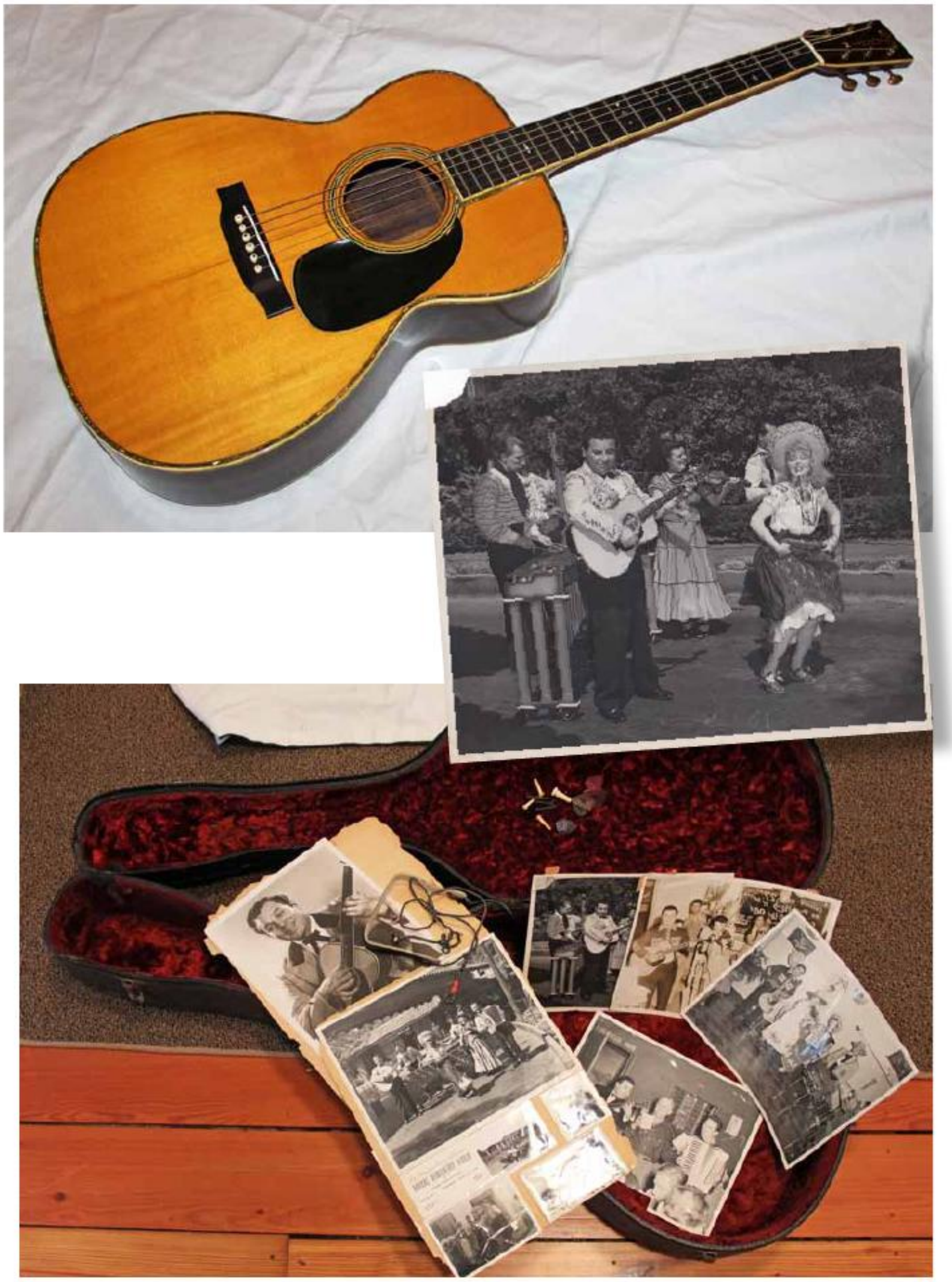
NASHVILLE'S PREMIER LOCATION FOR BUYING AND SELLING VINTAGE GUITARS & GEAR

www.bluesvintageguitars.com

LIFE IS TOO SHORT TO PLAY A LOUSY GUITAR!

EDITOR'S INBOX

California Dreamin' 000-45 Style



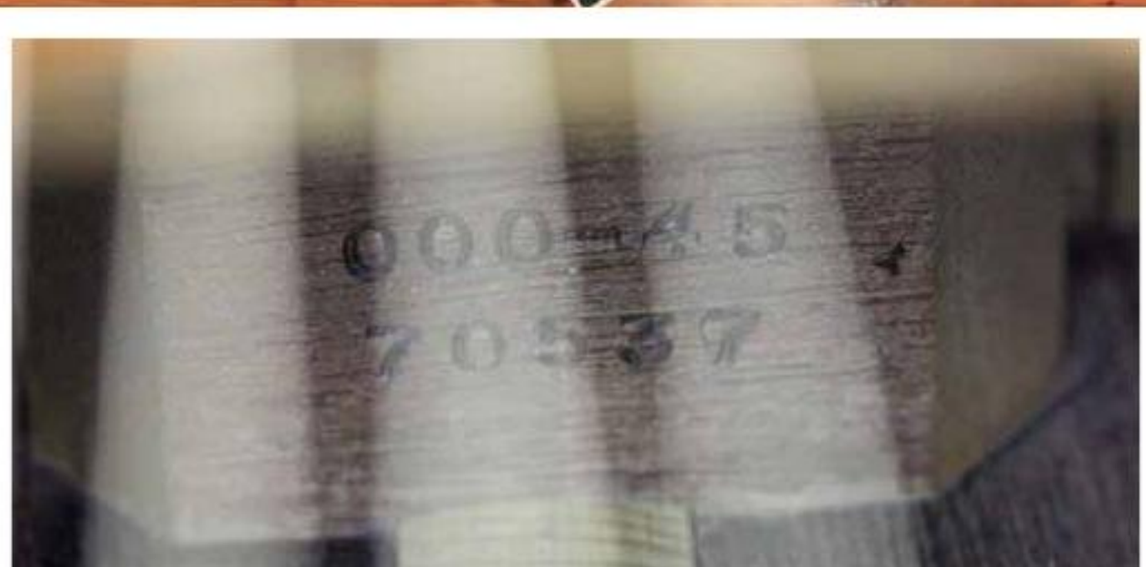
Out of the blue the other day I received an email from Judith Palmerino of First Event Auctions. She had a friend whose grandfather and his brother had both bought Martin guitars the same day at a music store in California. Her friend can remember her grandfather playing it for her on special holidays, birthdays, and sometimes just to make her happy. He performed in a Mariachi band in California.

That is a nice story, but what makes this story more interesting is the fact that the year was 1937, and the Martin's they bought were 000-45's. The grandfather's guitar was shipped back to Martin for service in 1971. They replaced the pick guard and the bridge bar. Outside of that, the guitar and its case are all original. The grandfather passed away in 1973 and for the next 40 years that beautiful treasure lived silent in a closet. Judith's friend's mother kept it safe for her daughter, as the guitar always was meant to be hers along with the photos and memories. Shortly before her mother passed away she gave the guitar to her and it made a 3,000-mile trip to a new home. It was cleaned and checked out by some folks in the Martin guitar world, and they claim it is one of the nicest examples they've seen.

Somewhere along the way, the brother who had bought the other of the two guitars that day in California, sold his Martin to Graham Nash.

Judith told me that as much as her friend loves the guitar, it needs to be played and seen by others who will treasure it as much as she has, so it is going up for auction. The guitar was valued somewhere between $85,000-90,000. Time will tell, as the auction is slated for this August, 2015. At press time Judith didn't know what the reserve amount would be. For more information about the auction call 508-272-9958.

Editor's note: If you have a cool guitar story email me at bruce@collectibleguitar.com



"Petros Guitars" continued from page 44

lone border companion, and the intricate soundhole artwork.

In 2006, when Bruce acquired a supply of "sinker redwood," we decided that Curly African Rosewood sides and back would be a perfect match for my second model. Although continents apart, these flamed tone woods provided a grand stage for a different voicing. The highest grade mother of pearl and Paua abalone interplay around the body with the subtle, but elegant Boxwood trim.

Beyond stunning, Bruce's innovative approach toward function and tone are displayed by pre-stressing the tops, with 30 foot radius shaped, symmetrical braces. This process increases the stability of the top, as well as allowing the fretboard to ramp up to the body. The arching of the top accentuates the treble. The meticulous graduation mimics the soft edge of a speaker, thus creating more bass. Abandoning the traditional Maple or Rosewood plate, he employs a spruce support with a small ebony pin plate to create more strength with less mass.

Without superb playability, the aforementioned is a Ferrari without fuel. Two pieces of end flip matched Honduras Mahogany, with a functional decorative lamination under the fingerboard, eliminates the possibility of the dreaded twisted neck. The dovetailed neck joint, tapered edges, and the wide bone nut, allow great string spacing for hours of effortless enjoyment.

Rarely stationary, during the recent national recession, Petros added more models, from parlor to baritone size, with dozens of combinations of woods and trim styles. When ukuleles gained traction with the public, they built a zenith version that soars over mass produced market models.

Respecting the past, but not one to revere all things vintage, Bruce also developed and patented Purflex®, a high tech, flexible purfling. Established guitar companies and luthiers purchase his variety of choices to upgrade their yesteryear designs.

In this present culture, where consumers scream "faster, cheaper, better," Bruce is confident that Matt will continue to grow the family business with the "drip line" truth that the branches you see above the ground reflect the width and depth of the roots below. Like the dormant organism, Petros Guitars has everything they need, but they are content to patiently wait for the right conditions to continue branching their roots.

*To learn more about Petros guitars, please visit www.petrosguitars.com.

*With intended purpose, it is no coincidence that Paul is in the studio recording songs for his new project, "Branching Roots." To learn more about Paul Clark, please visit www.paulclarkmusic.com.

"View of the Day" continued from page 50

hook. Maybe a line from the chorus, or sometimes the verse, can dictate the line. Sometimes the song will have the same feel as another hit, so I'll think of a line in the same vein as the hit. I have found that people want to hear something familiar, BUT not a rip off some other song. There is a fine line there.

I also love finding spots in the song to sprinkle little fills. You gotta love those little 3 or 4 note things that fit across all the different chords of the chorus or verse.

DC: What are some of the highlights of your career? (Besides working with me!!)

KB: Dave, you know you're my favorite! Getting to work with some of my heroes, like Kenny Hinson, Andrew Gold, and Paul Simon. Also, getting to work with my studio musician heroes and getting to call them friends.

DC: From your perspective as a player, how has the industry changed?

KB: I think downloads and subscription based music services have hit the industry pretty hard, which has trickled down to every part of the biz, including us studio guys.

I think there is less work, but also I think there are less players here than in the 90's heydays. I feel very blessed to stay busy!

I have noticed that I am doing a broader range of stuff these days. Country, Gospel, Rock, Pop, and also I've noticed a 3 hour session that used to be one writer or artist is now a combination of 3 to 5 different songwriters and/or artists. I am doing more and more overdubs at my home studio also. Probably at least 30 percent.

DC: Who are the players you are listening to now?

KB: There are so many greats! I still am a big Steve Lukather fan. Tommy Emanuel, Guthrie Govan, and Dirty Loops are pretty amazing! I'm a pretty big fan of Bruno Mars also. An amazing singer songwriter you should check out is Tim Menzies.

DC: For the guitarists coming up, what advice would you give them?

KB: Practice, practice, practice! Learn every song, solo, and riff you can. Take advantage of technology. (YouTube, apps for guitarists, etc.) You can learn in an hour on YouTube what would take me days to learn back in the record player days…LOL. Get in a band and play as much as you can. Always be pushing yourself.

And never forget to give the good Lord above credit for your gift!

Dave Cleveland is a session guitarist from Nashville. He's recorded for Miley Cyrus, Martina McBride, Stephen Stills, Judy Collins, Whitney Wolanin & Girls Generation. He recently wrote the tv theme for Mud People and Mustang Millionaire.

The Capo Company

Performance 2

Smaller, lighter, faster

FREE LIFETIME WARRANTY

Visit us at www.G7th.com

G7thTheCapoCompany

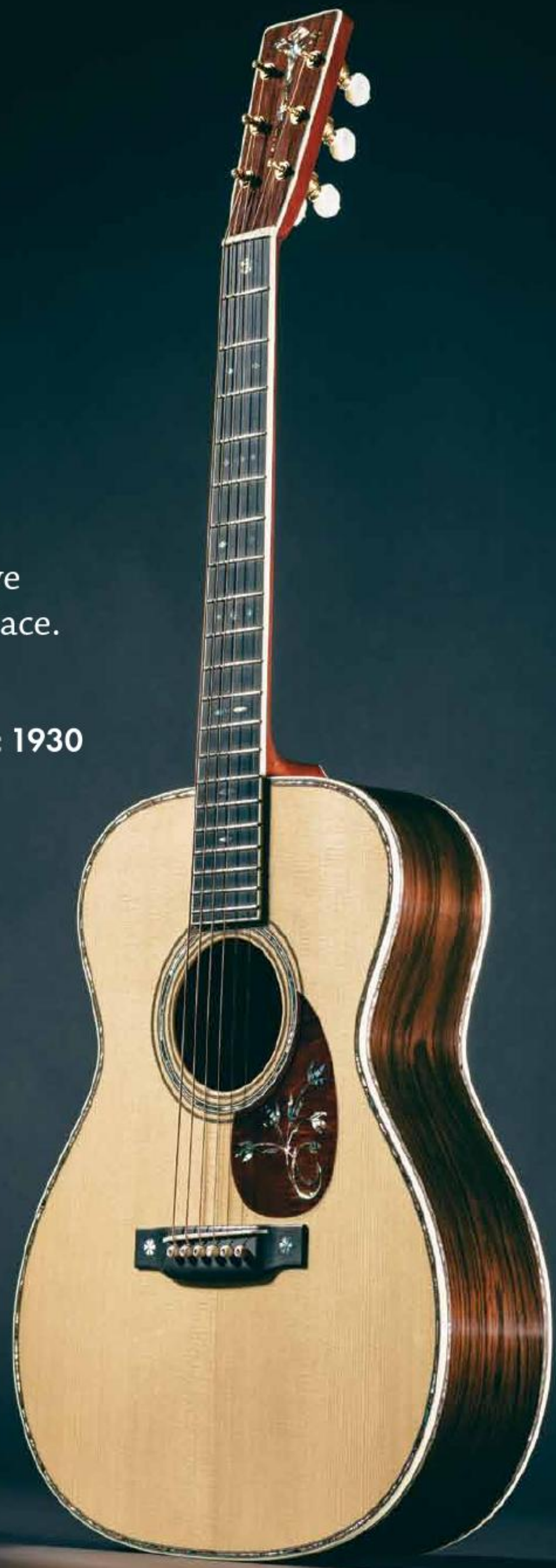
@G7thCapos

TheCapoCompany

G7thcapo

Why you fell in love
with us in the first place.

OM-45 De Luxe Authentic 1930



Martin & Co.
EST. 1833

D35
TURNS
50

martinguitar.com/new